

Research and Revolution

Many ZMO researchers have worked in areas of long-term political or economic crisis, be it Kashmir, Palestine or Mali. Since most conflicts are directly connected to the legacy of colonialism and colonial interventions, they touch us and evoke an uneasy mix of feelings, sometimes of blame, more often of scepticism and a sense of responsibility. Various strategies help us to deal more or less effectively with the ethical and political challenges involved: translocal perspectives, narratives »from below«, tracing interconnectivities, combining philological, historical and anthropological methods and, probably most importantly, questioning our own position and, at times, political engagement on the ground.

*But now Revolution!* In revolutionary times there is a new urgency to answer questions about the role of research in the humanities and social sciences, particularly in area studies. This applies to different levels. Do I book or cancel a flight when a revolution breaks out? Do I have to choose sides? Do I want or have to change my research topic in the wake of such an event? On the other hand, how do I deal with the complaint that the Egyptian revolution has sparked a wave of academic revolutionary tourism? After all, whose revolution is it?

*Local viewpoints* It seems that everyone has their own narrative of revolutions, either theories and readings or something real and witnessed. East Germany's so-called Peaceful Revolution in 1989 comes to mind. I have a strange feeling that the *Wende* experience has shaped the way Germans view, research and interpret the Middle East, and had a greater impact on our current research agenda than the Arab revolutions under review. But, of course, that is not the whole story.

*Bettina Gräf is part of the research group In Search of Europe: Considering the Possible in Africa and the Middle East. She is working on the concept of Islam as comprehensive order at the beginning of the Cold War. Since the January 25 Revolution she has been in Cairo several times.*

*On the ground* It is easy to reflect on these questions from a distance. Once you are there everything changes. A revolution alters a political system – albeit unfortunately not the prevailing socio-economic inequalities – and likewise the researcher and the agenda concerned. In my case, talking to Egyptians about the 1940s and 1950s (and the revolution or military coup in 1952) before and after January 2011 was very different. People are now more discerning, for example, about the role of the military. They question the fact that every family has at least one relative working in or for the military, and discuss the importance of the latter for the Egyptian economy in terms of promoting the civilian industry, financing agricultural production or fostering national infrastructure projects. Another example are opposition movements such as the Muslim Brothers, who have operated illegally (or semi-legally) since the 1950s but are now experiencing renewed – more open – endorsement among wide sections of the population (although currently this seems to have ebbed somewhat). Overall, I can say that because people on site communicate and act in an entirely new way, my research has changed.

*Language* Terms and vocabulary to describe what was going on had to be found instantly by those on the ground and by national and international media. There are nevertheless significant differences in the terminology used. In Egypt, the events are primarily known as the January 25 Revolution (*thawrat 25 yanayir*), while German and other international media allude to the Arab Spring, the Upheaval or the Uprising. *Al Jazeera* was instrumental in coining the term Arab Spring. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* even invented »Arabellion«, which risks underestimating the magnitude of the event and the universal significance of subsequent revolutions. Links were made to protests in Spain, Greece or the United States. London's Occupy LSX move-



The people want a civil High Council, Cairo Tahrir Square, November 2011. Photo: Mohamed Sultan

Rules for the square of the Egyptian Revolution, among them »The square speaks with one microphone only, other voices parallel are not permitted.«, Cairo Tahrir Square, November 2011. Photo: Mohamed Sultan



ment treated the area around St Paul's to a spoof street sign reading »Tahrir Square EC4M, City of Westminster«; nearby, a cardboard sign sporting »The IMF is our global Mubarak«. Today, more than a year later, I am still enthusiastic about the January 25 Revolution. On the other hand, I am also disappointed, as are friends and colleagues, about the many goals that have not been achieved and are unlikely to be in the near future. My research is no longer the same. I feel a new urge to link events in Egypt to those in Europe, to be in solidarity with the Egyptian people and ultimately to understand their history as part of my own. Bettina Gräf

## Transforming Memories: Cultural Production and Personal/Public Memory in Lebanon and Morocco directed by Dr Sonja Hegasy (ZMO) and Monika Borgman (UMAM D&R)

Research in the field of memory studies has in recent years broadened into a consideration of how memory, trauma, violence, and testimony take place in more intimate contexts of cultural and political practices through various forms of social exchange.

Comparatively, Morocco and Lebanon are exceptional in that for at least 20 years their respective public cultures have been characterised by energetic forms of cultural production that creatively engage a violent past as sites of dialogue in and for the present. From a multidisciplinary perspective—including oral history, Islamic studies, literary, cultural and gender studies, political science and cultural anthropology—the project *Transforming Memories* addresses memory and trauma in Morocco and Lebanon as transformative sites in which past and present are situated as shifting boundaries across personal and public registers.



Beirut, March 2012. Photo: Laura Menin

*Sonja Hegasy* studied Islamic studies and political science, specialising in the political sociology of contemporary Morocco and Egypt. In 1995 she finished her PhD on »State, Public Sphere and Civil Society in Morocco«. Subsequently, she worked for two years in Egypt and joined ZMO in 1998. For many years she researched the emergence of civil society in Morocco, social mobilization and local politics of history and memory. In 2004, she was granted the SFB-subproject »Forgive and Forget. A Comparative Study of Memory Work in the Middle East«. Since 2008, she has headed the research project »Identity Politics in Changing Societies of Morocco and Iraq« (along with Prof Dr Ulrike Freitag). Out of this grew an externally funded line of research on the issue of memory and communicative processes.

*Monika Borgman* together with her partner Lokman Slim, is founder and director of UMAM, a non-profit organization devoted to creating an open archive to foster research on Lebanon's more recent social and political history, as well as to organize film screenings, art exhibitions and discussions relating to civil violence and war memory. Borgman studied Arab philology and political science in Bonn and finished her MA in 1989. In Lebanon in 2001, she worked on the documentary film *Massaker*, together with Lokman Slim and Hermann Theissen. The film presents

the narratives of six men, perpetrators of the massacre of Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in 1982. It has been presented at more than 40 festivals and received seven awards.

### Sites of ReMemory: Situating Cultural Production and Civil War in Lebanon

*Norman Saadi Nikro* completed his doctoral thesis in cultural studies at the University of New South Wales in Sydney in 1998. He has published on Australian literature and culture, Lebanese-Anglophone literature and Arab-Lebanese literature. His book *The Fragmenting Force of Memory* will be published in 2012.

*Subproject* Since the formal end in 1990 of the 15-year civil war, the Lebanese state has opted for a strategy that can be euphemistically called »turning the page«: the institutional management of forgetting, or what can be otherwise termed a state-sponsored practice of *dismemory*. This encompasses the glaring absence of any state initiatives engaging in a public inquiry into the war as well as of state-supported museums, memorials or commemorative practices. Nonetheless, there has been a prodigious amount of cultural production situating the civil war as sites of

*rememory* in the present. This is evident in the visual and literary arts and the lively grassroots work of NGOs and civil society organizations. These creative and critical practices work to render the present open to review, initiating memory as an ethical concern for a political culture and public ethos attuned more to practices of care and nurture and modalities of grief and mourning. By taking a phenomenological approach to practices and forms of cultural production, testimony and public confession and body and voice, this project situates them as sites of *rememory*, as an ethical modality of social exchange.

### Wounded Memories: An Ethnographic Approach to Contemporary Moroccan Cultural Production

*Laura Menin* studied social and cultural anthropology at the University of Milano Bicocca (MA 2006) and at the University of Sussex (UK). Drawing on 14 months of ethnographic research in a rural region of Morocco, her doctoral thesis explores young women's experiences of love and intimacy in the spheres of family, friendship, romance and conjugal life. In 2005 and 2006, Menin worked with young Muslim women born and raised in Italy, and in 2007 she studied migrants' political participation in Milan. In

the same year, she took part in a project on gender and life-writing directed by Dr Barbara Mapelli. Her approach privileges a post-colonial feminist perspective and engages biographies and life-stories as sites of analysis.



Cinema Camera, Meknes. Photo: Arne Kuilman

**Subproject** Along with the changed political climate of *le gouvernement de l'alternance* (1998), which included the promise of democracy fostered by the reign of Mohammed VI (1999), cultural production in Morocco has contributed to the image of the so-called *nouveau Maroc*. By interweaving daily life and history and personal and collective memories, political activists and artists have shared significant (hi)stories with their audiences. In many cases, these narratives have challenged the former government's interest in sustaining historical amnesia – the post-colonial historiography of denying and forgetting embraced by Hassan II until shortly before his death (1999). The emergence of counter-narratives of former political prisoners appearing in the forms of novels, poems, cartoons, movies and (auto)biographies helped place pressure on Mohammed VI to set up the Equity and Reconciliation Commission in 2004. Recent scholarship has provided insights into the institutional processes of reparation and reconciliation and their ambiguities. Yet there remains a need to further explore the role of cultural production in shaping transformative sites of memory. How do films, fictions and autobiographies contribute to re-orienting people's imagination, memory and agency? Based on an ethnographic approach to cultural productions and circulations as well as audiences, the subproject aims to uncover the multiple ways in which people in Morocco engage with public culture and the politics of memory to discuss the present, reflect upon the past and imagine the future.

## Memory and Reconciliation: Conflict on Mount Lebanon

**Makram Rabah** is a graduate of the American University of Beirut and earned his BA in 2003 and MA in 2007 in history with a minor in political studies. He also has a law degree from the Lebanese University. He is

currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of History at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Rabah's research interests include the modern Middle East, the modern history of Lebanon and the role of memory in the reconciliation process. He is the author of *A Campus at War: Student Politics at the American University of Beirut 1967-1975* (Nelson Publications, 2009).

**Subproject** This subproject explores the reconciliation process between the Druze and the Maronites within the historical context of the Mountain War that erupted in the summer of 1983. The research examines how decision-makers and participants in these events have different perceptions and memories of what went on at various stages of the conflict. This will be done in part by drawing on the existing literature – ranging from novels and films to surveys and chronicles – that deals directly or indirectly with the Mountain War. While many of the extant works on the civil war use oral history, none of them juxtaposes the views of the different warring factions in relation to the same incidents. They also do not refer to the differences in party rhetoric. This project seeks to

*Tazmamart prison, located in the Middle Atlas range, known today as one of the most infamous penitentiaries of the Years of Lead. Photo acquired from Mark MacNamara*



document the experiences of the individuals involved in the conflict (combatants, politicians and civilians) and examine the extent to which the events of that conflict still affect their perception of their ›former enemy‹.

## Memory Politics in Morocco in the Aftermath of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

**Christine Rollin** has had a research interest in the topic of Transitional Justice for several years. She completed her Master's thesis ›Transitional Justice Under Authoritarian Rule. An Analysis of the Moroccan Dealing With the ›Lead Years‹ from a Discourse Theoretical Perspective‹ in 2010, in the department of Political Science at the Otto-Suhr-Institut of the Freie Universität Berlin.

Rollin joins the team to develop her PhD project on Morocco. Developing further her previous work on the Equity and Reconciliation Commission (ERC), Rollin is interested in the aftermath of the truth commission's work. The ERC concluded its work with its final report in early 2006. This report provides a detailed account of the human rights violations committed by the state in the *Years of Lead* (1956-1999) and offers a set of recommendations for ›repairing‹ the harm done and preventing human rights violations in the future. The focus of Rollin's research will therefore be on the issue of collective reparations. These were recommended by the ERC to complement the individual reparations that had been granted to victims or their families. Looking at select cases of collective reparations, she asks: Do personal experiences and memories of the past shape the process (and thus potentially the outcome) of these projects? If yes, *whose* experiences have the greatest impact and does this, in turn, work to transform memory and social life in the respective communities? And lastly, how are the local, national, and international actors involved in collective reparations perceived?

# Of Scouting, Schoolbooks and Societies: A Cultural Reappraisal of Arab Nationalism

Dyala Hamzah

With roots in major political/intellectual currents of the beginning of the 20th century, Arab nationalism resonated with a sizeable portion of world history at that time, making its study especially crucial for our understanding of the contemporary Middle East. Before it solidified into the form of the Arab League (1945) and eventually became identified with one-party socialist regimes, Arab nationalism encountered colonialism and competing nationalisms, namely, French and British imperialism, Turkish nationalism, Zionism and National Socialism. In the course of these encounters, it produced a host of social, cultural and political institutions, which, even if they did not all survive the tide of independence, gave the national public spheres that emerged thereafter their foreclosed structures.

Some of these were deemed especially conducive to Arab unity, despite being embedded in the apparatuses of the colonial administration. Identifying these institutions contributes to a better understanding of the mechanisms behind the global spread of nationalism. In locating them within the public sphere, this project critically engages with the print-media paradigm, shifting attention from the circulation of printed ideas to other technologies of social communication. The commitment of pan-Arabs to scouting, schoolbooks and societies indeed begs the question of a quasi organic link between nationalism and the public sphere. If only for that reason, their often trans-local biographies are a unique vantage point from which to appreciate the transposability of socio-political forms of organization and protest.

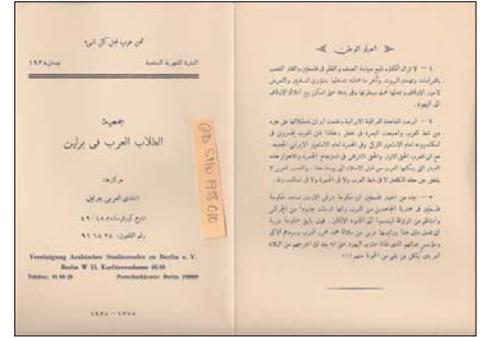
Darwish al-Miqdadi was born in 1897 into a family of provincial notables from a village near Tulkarem (in the then imperial province of Beirut, district of Nablus), and he died a bureaucrat in the service of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education in Beirut, Lebanon on 14 March 1961. Born an Ottoman, he died an Iraqi. In the interim, he was stripped of his Palestinian citizenship under the British mandate, and then again stripped and reinstated in the 1940s with regard to his Iraqi citizenship, following his alleged involvement in the Rashid Ali al-Kilani coup (1941). His career was that of an educator and ideologue in the



Miqdadi, Palestine, 1920s  
Photo: Family Archive  
Dyala Hamzah

*The Arab Students Association of Berlin was quartered in the Arabic Club in Berlin at Kurfürstendamm 48/49. Both were founded 1937. The monthly newsletter it published bore the motto »We are Arabs first and foremost«.*

service of Arab nationalism. Attending school before the First World War during the second Ottoman constitutional period (1908-1914) and trained during the protracted collapse of the Empire (1918-1922), he attended a dizzying array of institutions of learning: the *kuttab* of his village, the Ottoman and French schools of Beirut, the American University of Beirut, and finally, the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Berlin (1930s). He learned as many languages as were used in these institutions, namely, Arabic, Ottoman Turkish, French, English and German. Eventually, he went on to teach history, first in Jerusalem at the Arab and Islamic Colleges (1922-1927) and, later, in Baghdad and Mosul (1927-1936), where he was hired by Sat' al-Husri at the Higher Teachers College and, finally, at the Syrian University in Damascus (1948-1950). He subsequently offered pedagogical expertise to the Kuwaitis in the 1950s. Al-Miqdadi seemed to have lived a life consistent with his beliefs, teaching and mentoring, agitating and demonstrating, resigning and serving prison terms in the name of the ideology he promoted in his writings. His trajectory, however, was entirely framed by the bureaucracies he served, whether they were colonial or national. Belonging to a



generation moulded by the press, he interestingly seems to have engaged little with that medium. Nonetheless, having identified youth as target of nationalist discourse and practice, he went on to establish cultural-political societies, form scouting groups and author schoolbooks in the 1920s and 1930s. Amongst these were (respectively): the Muthanna Club of Baghdad and the Arabic Club of Berlin (1930s); the youth movements Firqat Khalid ibn al-Walid (Jerusalem, 1920s) and the Jawwal al-'Arabi (Bagdad, 1930s); and the textbooks *Tarikhuna bi uslub qisasi* (Our History by Way of Stories, 1935) and *Tarikh al-umma al-'arabiyya* (History of the Arab Nation, 1936).

*Dyala Hamzah holds a PhD in history and Islamic studies from the Freie Universität Berlin and the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (Paris). A post-doc fellow at the ZMO since 2008, she is currently part of the Forschergruppe Akteure der kulturellen Globalisierung, 1860–1940, a joint project of the Freie Universität Berlin, the Humboldt Universität, Universität Hamburg and the ETH Zürich, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Hamzah's research project »Societies, Scouts and Schoolbooks for the Arab Nation: A Case Study of Pan-Arabist Darwish al-Miqdadi (1897-1961)« will be turned into a biography of Miqdadi.*

## Guest Scholars January-June 2012

Dr Saulesh Yessenova, University of Calgary ■ Dr Tim Epkenhans, University of Freiburg ■ Prof Adeb Khalid, Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota ■ Prabhat Kumar, University of Heidelberg ■ Dr Katja Füllberg-Stolberg, University Hannover ■ Dr Seema Kazi, Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi ■ Dr Eren Tasar, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri ■ Prof Nikolay Dobronravin, State University St. Petersburg ■ Prof Elisa Giunchi, University of Milan ■ Dr Johan Rasanayagam, University of Aberdeen ■ Prof Roy Dilley, University of St Andrews ■ Prof Alice Bellagamba, University of Milan-Bicocca ■ Dr Julian Millie, Monash University, Melbourne ■ Dr Wolfgang Holzwarth, University of Halle-Wittenberg ■ Prof Joseph Massad, Columbia University, New York ■ Samia Khatun, University of Sydney ■ Prof Dhruv Raina, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi ■ Dr Manuela Ciotti, Aarhus University ■ Dr Lale Can, New York University ■ Prof Betty Anderson, Boston University ■ Dr Madeleine Reeves, University of Manchester ■ Prof Sumit Mandal, Humboldt University Berlin ■ Prof Euphrase Kezilahabi, University of Botswana ■ Sunit Singh, University of Chicago ■ Hafeez Jamali, University of Texas at Austin

## ■ Conferences & Workshops

### Rethinking Urban Violence in Middle Eastern Cities, ZMO, 8-10 December 2011

Since 2010, Middle Eastern cities as landscapes of violent conflict have been part of ZMO's larger research focus on urban history. The DFG/AHRC funded Anglo-German research project investigates the emergence and different forms of public and popular violence in selected Ottoman, Arab and Iranian cities from the early 19th century to the 1960s. It specifically asks in what ways the ›violent politics of the street‹ can be understood as both a symptom and a constitutive element of the transition from imperial orders to the age of nation states.

This question was discussed during the workshop by an international group of Middle East historians and city planners. In his opening lecture on ›Hope, Violence, and the Urban Dimension of the Egyptian Revolution‹, the Egyptian architect Khaled Adham (Al-Ain) described the spatial dimensions of social injustice, authoritarian rule and recent revolutionary protests in Cairo and hence conceived urban violence to be an inherent component of the politics of regression and change. Case studies ranging from Ottoman Cairo to Arabian and Iranian oil cities in the mid-20th century were presented and discussed among five panels, each illuminating the phenomenon from a specific analytical perspective.

In the first panel, *Disorder and Control*, Noemi Lévy-Aksu (Istanbul), Nora Lafi (Berlin) and Hidemitsu Kuroki (Tokyo) presented cases of

violence in the urban centres and peripheries of the Ottoman Empire and their contemporary perception as threats to the established order. The speakers argued that local and distant authorities as well as foreign powers used their resources to stir or control violence in accordance to their pursuit of power and legitimacy.

In the second panel, *Interpretations of Sectarian Violence*, Feryal Tansuğ (Istanbul), Florian Riedler (Berlin), Feras Krimsti (Berlin) and Denis Hermann (Ivry-sur-Seine) discussed violent encounters between religious groups in different cities of the Ottoman Empire and Qajar Iran. The speakers situated their cases in the geographical and socio-economic changes of the urban setting, which were inter alia consequences of the growing economic and political influence of European powers and the era's extensive administrative reforms.

The case studies presented in the third panel, *Urban Space and Symbolic Politics*, by Ulrike Freitag (Berlin) and Roberto Mazza (Macon, IL) provided insights into how state, municipal governments and urban communities in the Red Sea port city Jeddah and in Jerusalem employed violence, shortly before and after the end of the Ottoman Empire, in an almost ritualistic manner during crucial periods of economic and political change.

In a contrasting case, Reza Masoudi-Nejad (London) showed how urban communities of the early Iranian Republic employed pub-

lic rituals in order to integrate and appease neighbourhoods in a traditionally fragmented and potentially violent urban landscape. In the fourth panel, *Urban Violence in the Transition from Imperial to Post-Imperial Orders*, Isa Blumi (Leipzig), Stephanie Cronin (Oxford) and Fatemeh Masjedi (Berlin) took a closer look at the rising potential for violent conflict in Ottoman and Qajar cities due to the disintegration of social order in times of imperial breakdown. They argued that the disruption of urban networks between state, municipal authorities and influential urban groups – either by the influx of foreign powers' interests or by the new ability of the state to monopolize the means of violence – damaged traditional channels for peaceful negotiation.

The speakers on the fifth panel, *Changing Violent Landscapes in the Age of Nation State*, Hanan Hamad (Fort Worth, TX), Rasmus Elling (London), Nelida Fuccaro (London) and Claudia Schröder (Berlin), discussed violent conflicts in the context of rapid industrialization and state consolidation in the mid-20th century. While some functions of the traditional urban communities found their equivalent in the ›modern‹ industrial city (Hamad), post-colonial interpretations of segregation and control have a limited ability to explain the emergence of violence. Instead, the speakers suggested that oil cities in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia featured intrinsic threats of violence due to the relative social and political instability of the respective states.

In their concluding discussion, the participants of the workshop emphasized that historiography must examine urban violence as an integral element of any social and political order and its expressions in the urban space rather than as an irrational exception.

A selection of the presented papers will be published in 2013. *Claudia Schröder*



### Ruptures and Linkages. Biography and History in the South, GHI London, 16-18 February 2012

This conference focused on the complicated relationship between individual biographies and their social, political and economic context. It took a fresh approach to non-European biographical research in several ways. Firstly, it encouraged a comparative perspective of biographies of individuals in or from Africa, the Middle East and South Asia and also between these three regions and the ›Global North‹. Secondly, it examined the special importance of biographical approaches to the study of the history of the ›Global South‹. Thirdly, it reflected on the state of biographical research on Africa, South Asia

and Middle East from the perspective of these regions. Nearly 20 papers were discussed in five panels.

Several colleagues of the ZMO participated and presented papers on different aspects concerning their research topics:

The paper of Heike Liebau and her colleague Waltraud Ernst from Oxford Brooks University (›Post-Colonial Re-Dislocation: The Family Trajectories of four Generations in Colonial India and Post-Colonial Pakistan, Late Nineteenth/Early Twentieth-Century Germany and Modern Britain‹) focused on the role played by knowledge, knowledge

production and professional careers in the family biographies of four generations. They also asked questions like: When does a family biography start and when does it end? Who decides that? Who owns a family's biography? With the same focus on knowledge and knowledge production, Sophie Roche discussed in her lecture ›Becoming Experts: Biographies of Social Scientists against the Background of Political and Social Transformations in Central Asia‹ how autobiographies of scientists from Central Asia show how knowledge on Islam was produced in the time of the Soviet Union and how did this affect the way they conceptualize knowledge on Islam today.

In examining cases from the Swahili Coast, Kai Kresse illustrated in his presentation, »Biographies and Trajectories of Social History: Cases from the Swahili Coast«, how the biographies of individual Islamic scholars have shaped society in terms of social and religious reform, and how, in turn, changing social and historical dynamics have shaped the biographies of these individuals. Ben Zachariah maintained in his lecture »The Biographical Temptation: The Individual as Metonymy for ›Community‹, ›Nation‹ and ›Species‹« that we should, however, be wary of the easy logic that is pervasive in the studies of biographies, consisting of taking the part (the biography of the individual) to represent the whole (the society) or the whole (the Society) to represent the part (the biography of the individual). The risk is otherwise run of falling into the trap of the ›biographical illusion‹ mentioned by Bourdieu. Grappling with questions of identity and trajectory, so central to biographies in general, and to Ottoman/Post-Ottoman biographies in particular, Dyalah Hamzah questioned the place of Nazi politics within the ›German career‹ of Pan-Arab historian and activist al-Miqdadi, against the backdrop of the fascination of the times for fascism and the pre-eminence of anti-colonial struggle within Arab nationalist politics. Chanfi Ahmed considered in his presentation on »Salafism and Anti-Colonialism by Taqiyyu ad-Dîn al-Hilâlî, a Moroccan ‘âlim and a Great Traveller; 20th Century« Taqiyyu ad-Dîn al-Hilâlî as a collaborator with the Nazi regime, like his mentors Shakib Arslan and Haj Amin al-Hussein.

*Chanfi Ahmed*



## Border Zones, Nationalism & Conflict: The Cases of Kashmir and Kurdistan, ZMO, 24 February 2012

The workshop, organized by Antía Mato Bouzas and Andrea Fischer-Tahir, drew on broader academic discussions on political, economic and cultural practices taking place in borderland territories and within and across states. The purpose of the workshop was to compare border regions which emerged as the historical result of colonialism. The narrower focus of the workshop was on actors in Kashmir and Kurdistan and their practices of challenging through their own political aspirations the central states of India and Pakistan or Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran, respectively.

On the basis of presentations by Florian Riedler (ZMO) and Thomas Schmidinger (University of Vienna), the workshop started with a conceptual discussion of borders

resulting from political ordering and social space production. Kashmir and Kurdistan are both known in reference to protracted and intractable conflicts, given their relatively old histories and the difficulties in finding a satisfactory and lasting solution for all relevant actors. In this respect, Seema Kazi (Centre for Women’s Development Studies, New Delhi) discussed the negotiation of Kashmir’s status in relation to demands for autonomy and sovereignty, whereas Eva Savelsberg (European Centre for Kurdish Studies, Berlin) examined understandings of self-determination in Syrian Kurdistan. Shahnaz Khalil Khan (Humboldt University Berlin) and Karin Mlodoch (ZMO), for their part, addressed gendered aspects of nationalism and conflict in both regions, highlighting the strategies of women against those

nationalist narratives of resistance that tend to assign women the role of virgin victims, fertile bodies and mourning mothers. Antía Mato Bouzas and Andrea Fischer-Tahir, finally, turned to the economic aspects of border zones, exemplified by the cases in Kashmir and Kurdistan of developmentalism and processes of peripheralization. The comparative views on Kashmir and Kurdistan confirmed that there are similar strategies used by central-state actors in dealing with their peripheries. At the same time, it became clear that the marginalized and oppressed people in the discussed territories consider borders not only to be a constraint, but also a resource in achieving political, economic and cultural goals.

*Andrea Fischer-Tahir*



## Realigning Power Geometries in the Arab World, Leipzig, 24-26 February, 2012

Just one year after the most intense phase of the so-called Arab Spring, the VolkswagenStiftung organized this conference in order to explore possible innovative research paths on the Arab world, and to help set up new relationships between colleagues from Germany and the region. 140 participants attended the conference, hosted and co-organized by the Oriental Institute of the University of Leipzig (Jörg Gertel and Amira Augustin). Half of the participants were from the Arab world. The ZMO was represented by Yasmine Berriane, Bettina Gräf, Nora Lafi and Steffen Wippel and was indirectly represented by a series of guests from the Arab world who belong to the ZMO’s informal network of academic dialogue (Dalenda Larguèche from Tunis or Randa Abubakr from Cairo, for example).

A series of panels, whose main objective was to identify the gaps that forthcoming research projects should fill, explored a variety of thematic and regional issues with a diversity of disciplinary approaches, ranging from anthropology and cultural studies to political studies and media studies as well as geography, economics, history and Islamic studies.

The ZMO participated in various panels. An example includes »Past and Present of the Arabellion. Revisiting the Past after the Arab Spring: Mobilization and Contestation from Below«, which was co-prepared by Birgit Schäßler, Yasmine Berriane, Nora Lafi and Ulrike Freitag.

Furthermore, the history/Islamic studies joint panel was led by Nora Lafi and some of the ideas and proposals which emerged from it were retained as priorities for future initiatives during the final session. The ideas included the need for a historization of present events by documentation and the need for a connection between micro and macro perspectives. From a methodological point of view the idea of privileging tandems has been retained as a tool for achieving a real way to share experiences and ideas.

During the final plenary session, the Secretary General of the VolkswagenStiftung, Dr. Krull, announced that a call for projects was to be drafted on the basis of the conference’s results, with a strong focus on the financing of potential initiatives which are not yet adequately covered by existing funding sources.

*Nora Lafi*

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## ■ Other Activities



### Exhibition: Was Wir Sehen. Bilder, Stimmen, Rauschen. Zur Kritik anthropometrischen Sammelns, 15 May - 6 July 2012

The exhibition critically engages in the violent history of anthropometric practice – the measuring and categorizing of the human body for anthropological research – in the early 20th century. On the basis of a »racial archive«, which was built up by the German scientific laymen Hans Lichtenecker in today's Namibia in 1931, the curator Anette Hoffmann investigates this archive as a mode of representation. The archive comprises facial casts, photographs and recorded voices of men and women living in the former Ger-

man colony of South-West Africa. In the recordings, the people comment on the disturbing and violating experience they underwent while being casted and measured. Their voices have recently been translated into English and German and form an integral part of the exhibition.

The exhibition is located at the Pergamon-Palais, Humboldt University of Berlin (Georgenstr. 47, 10117 Berlin, mon-fri 12-4pm). For more information, see [http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/2012/WWS\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/2012/WWS_flyer.pdf)

Regina Sarreiter

## Dina Wilkowsky (Nurtasinova) 2.4.1960–19.1.2012



*The Mufti of Kazakhstan Sheikh Abdsattar Qazhy Derbissali and Dina Wilkowsky in March 2010 during a visit to the Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur Berlin*

**D**ina Wilkowsky started her academic career in Almaty in 1982. After her university studies in Oriental languages and literature (with a main emphasis on Arab and Persian) at the faculty of Oriental studies at the State University in Tashkent (1977-1982), she joined the Al-Farabi University in Almaty at the age of 22 as a research assistant for the Arab-language department in the faculty of philosophy. From 1984 to 1988, she was a doctoral student at the Lomonossov University in Moscow in the department of cultural studies and received her PhD from the faculty of philosophy. In her PhD thesis, she dealt with philosophical aspects of contemporary culture in Egypt.

The political changes in the late 1980s also affected Wilkowsky's position as a scholar in the humanities. With the decline of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan began to re-establish its own institutions of oriental studies as an independent country. Wilkowsky was among the pioneering academics who were involved in these processes. At the Al-Farabi University in Almaty, she taught the first generations of young Kazakhstan orientalists.

From 1992 to 1996, Wilkowsky did research at the

Academy of Science in Almaty within the scope of a project on Kazakhstan's position in the system of international relations. She first visited ZMO in 1995 (then called Forschungsschwerpunkt Moderner Orient), where she gave a talk on the development of contemporary Islamic education in Kazakhstan. At this time, Islam in Kazakhstan and Central Asia became a major field of interest for her. Returning to the Al Farabi University in Almaty in the summer of 1996, she became the chair of the department of Oriental languages of the newly founded faculty of international relations where she, among other things, developed curricula for translators and diplomats for the young Republic of Kazakhstan.

After marrying a German, Wilkowsky moved to Germany in 2001. Beyond the language barrier, the start of a new academic career here was a great challenge. After several unsuccessful attempts, her project on Arab-Islamic organisations in contemporary Kazakhstan was funded by the Volkswagen-Stiftung (2004-2007). Its results were published in a monograph in 2009. Wilkowsky joined ZMO in January 2010 with her project entitled »Contesting Public Spheres. »Discussion Clubs« in Kazakhstan

between Politics, Science and Islam«. Besides her own research, she immediately began to systematically strengthen Central Asian studies at ZMO. Together with younger colleagues, Wilkowsky invited scholars, politicians and religious leaders from Central Asia for a successful series called »On Islam and Society in Central Asia« (2010/11). Her knowledge of the region and networks and contacts to colleagues and former students from Central Asia were unique. Of equal significance was her »mission«, on the one hand, to integrate Central Asian Studies at ZMO and, on the other, to make ZMO known in Central Asia.

In memory of Dina Wilkowsky, a round table discussion was held at the Kazakh Al-Farabi University in Almaty on 30 March 2012 that was organized by the department of Arab and Persian studies together with the Institute of Oriental Studies. The decision was also made to publish her monograph on Arab-Islamic organizations in Kazakhstan in the Russian language and to create an award for an exceptional magistrand studying in the department of Arab and Persian studies at the Al-Farabi University.

Heike Liebau

# publications

## ■ Books & Media

*The world in world wars: experiences, perceptions and perspectives from Africa and Asia.* Edited by Heike Liebau, Katrin Bromber, Katharina Lange, Dyala Hamzah, and Ravi Ahuja. Studies in Global History 5. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2010. 613 pp. Reviewed by David Motadel for Journal of Global History 7 (1), 153-155

» The European empires, as is shown throughout the volume, played a crucial part in the global history of the world wars. In Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia the wars were interwoven with colonial occupation as well as the struggle for independence. It was the European empires, in fact, that turned the wars into ›world wars‹. Nevertheless, the editors stress that the history of the periphery should not be reduced to their contribution to the war effort of the great powers; indeed, most of the authors avoid seeing the colonies exclusively in relation to the imperial centre. «



# news

ZMO welcomed several new colleagues in the first half of 2012. The members of the newly initiated project on *Transforming Memories* Dr **Norman Saadi Nikro**, **Laura Menin**, **Makram Rabah** and **Christine Rollin** introduce themselves in the *Profiles* section, as does Dr **Dyala Hamzah**. Another ZMO-based colleague, Dr **Jeanne Féaux de la Croix**, will start a new project at the ZMO in September 2012. After finishing her research on competing forms of knowledge in Kyrgyzstan, she is going to work on »Young Teachers for a Better Future: A Comparison of Late Soviet and Contemporary Development and Mission Workers in Kyrgyzstan«. Dr **Yasmine Berriane** moved from the BGS MCS to join the ZMO in February. She continues her work on Morocco with a project titled »The Youth Centre of Hayy Mohammadi: the Making of a Participatory Sphere Institution in Morocco«. Dr **Chanfi Ahmed** joined the BGS MCS as a senior research fellow as of February 2012. **Erdem Evren** began his fellowship in

January 2012, shortly after submitting his doctoral dissertation to the political science department at the FU Berlin. He studied sociology and social anthropology in Istanbul and London before moving to Germany. His current project, »Fluid Destinies of Çoruh: Techno-capitalist Development and the Politics of Water in the Black Sea Region of Turkey«, investigates the changes in the social experience and the living environment within the context of the hydro-power projects initiated on the Çoruh River.

Dr **Paolo Gaibazzi** started on 1 February 2012. He was trained as a social anthropologist at the University of Kent and the University of Oxford. In 2010, he completed his PhD in anthropology at the University of Milano-Bicocca on the dynamics of mobility and sedentariness among young Soninke men in the Gambia. At the ZMO, his project explores the legacy of a longstanding Muslim Trade Diaspora in the Gambia valley by following the trajectories of young entrepreneurs.

Dr **Muhammad Ali Raza**, already known at the ZMO as a visiting research fellow last year, received his doctorate in South Asian history from the University of Oxford in 2012. His PhD research focused on the role of progressive movements in local politics in South Asia. At the ZMO, he is investigating the engagement of South Asians with the global project of Communist Internationalism (ca. 1917–1979). His broader research interests revolve around marginalized political groupings and the insights they provide into the political, social and intellectual history of South Asia.

Dr **Hew Wai Weng** graduated from the Australian National University, where he finished his PhD thesis »Negotiating Ethnicity and Religiosity: Chinese Muslim Identities in Post-New Order Indonesia«. He recently completed his postdoctoral fellowship at the International Institute for Asian Studies in Leiden, the Netherlands. His research project at the ZMO is titled »Translocal and Cosmopolitan Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia«, and it aims to examine the translocal connections between Muslims in both countries as well as the possibilities of Islamic cosmopolitanism through such links. In particular, he is conducting research on Chinese-style mosques in contemporary Indonesia and Malaysia.

The ZMO bade farewell to the Alexander von Humboldt fellows Dr **Prem Poddar**, who left by the end of April, and Prof **Baz Lecocq**, who left by the end of June.

From March until June, Dr **Marloes Janson** had a work contract at the FU Berlin's Institute for Social Anthropology – with funding from the FU's Research Committee to work on a grant proposal.

As of July 2012, there will be a new project at the SFB 640: »Tourismus, Krieg, Erinnerung in Post-Konflikt-Städten: Beirut und Sarajevo im Vergleich«. Dr **Anja Peleikis** will work on »Orient und Okzident in Beirut: Stabilisierung sozialer Ordnungen durch (Re-)Touristifizierung«; **Jens Adam** is working on a project on »Potenziale der Stabilisierung: materielle Umgestaltung, Inszenierung und Touristifizierung des lokalen Raums in Sarajevo«.

As new visiting research fellows in 2012, the ZMO welcomes **Prabhat Kumar**, University of Heidelberg (January – February); **Samia Khatun**, University of Sydney (May – July); Dr **Manuela Ciotti**, Aarhus University in Denmark (June – July); Dr **Lale Can**, New York University (June – July); and **Abdoulaye Sounaye**, Northwestern University, Evanston (September – November).

The book *When the War Began We Heard of Several Kings: South Asian Prisoners in World War I Germany*, edited by Franziska Roy, Heike Liebau and Ravi Ahuja and published by Social Science Press New Delhi in September 2011, has recently been reissued. The reprint within the short time span of less than a year became necessary because the Raja Ram Mohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) in Kolkata ordered 340 copies of the book. This organisation buys books and then presents them as gifts to smaller, budget-constrained libraries which are usually situated in small towns and have eager readers.



# calendar

## ZMO-KOLLOQUIUM 2012/2013

27 September 2012 – 31 January 2013:

**The Impossible Aesthetic: Situating Arts and Cultural Production as Sites of Research**

## LECTURES

- 28 June 2012, HU Berlin, Hausvogteiplatz 5-7, 19.30h, Prof **Christophe Jaffrelot**: **Muslims in Indian Cities. Trajectories of Marginalisation** (ed. mit Laurent Gayer, Hurst, 2012) book presentation with PD Dr. Dietrich Reetz
- 20 August 2012, ZMO, 17.00h, Prof **Michel Tuchscherer**: **Hamams im Jemen: Architektur, Organisation und soziale Praktiken heute**

## OTHER EVENTS

- 15 May – 6 July 2012, Atrium Pergamon-Palais, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Exhibition: **Was Wir Sehen** (see p. 7)

For further information see:  
[www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen](http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen)