

The workshop is financially supported by



Freie Universität Berlin (Free University Berlin)

Interdisciplinary Center
"Social and Cultural History of the Middle East"

(Interdisziplinäres Zentrum
"Bausteine zu einer Gesellschaftsgeschichte des Vorderen
Orient")

and



Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO)
(Center for Modern Oriental Studies)



Location:

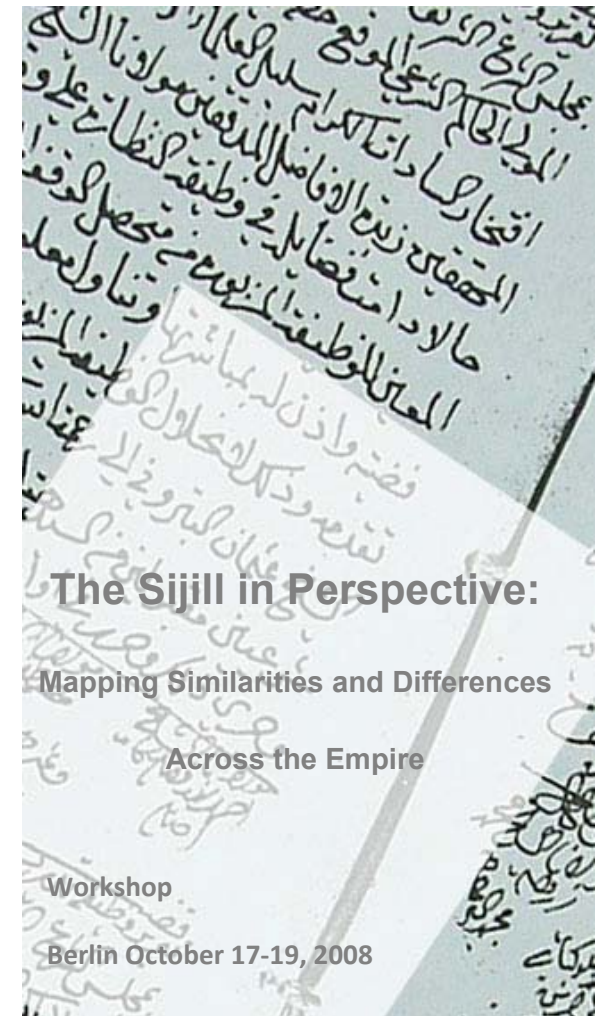
Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO)
(Center for Modern Oriental Studies)

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and

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Islamic Court Records (*sijillāt maḥākīm sharʿiyya*) are some of the most important sources for writing the social, economic, and cultural history of the Ottoman Empire. Especially within the framework of urban history, sijills have contributed to a better understanding of various groups and institutions, opening up new channels for analyzing moral, legal, and family discourses in Ottoman society. Moreover, by integrating the methodology, questions, and approaches of cultural studies and drawing upon the research of other regions, scholars have begun to challenge a set of inherited assumptions about state and society in the Ottoman Empire. Whereas earlier methods had used normative sources to weave a narrative of institutional decline from an idealized norm, new approaches emphasize the dynamism of social practice on a micro-historical level. More recently still, provincial cities have become major research interests, shedding new light on peripheral regions and marginalized groups of the empire.

However, while the use of the court as a socio-legal arena has helped display local agency and the plurality of urban experience, these innovative studies have too long existed in isolation from one another. This workshop aims to bridge this gap, bringing together scholars of the sijill working on different periods and regions in the Ottoman Empire. Through collective reflection on the use of the sijill, it hopes to compare diverse research experiences, consolidating them into a broader frame of reference and pointing out future directions of the study of Court Records. Mapping sijills' form and content will allow for discussions of similarities and differences across time and space.

Friday, October 17, 2008

9.30 – 10.30	Introduction: Nora Lafi and Christian Sassmannshausen
10.30 – 11.00	Panel Discussion: The Sijill in Perspective: A Framework for Discussion
11.00 – 11.15	break
11.15 – 12.45	Representativeness, Authenticity, and Use of the Court James Reilly (University of Toronto): <i>Selective Vision in the Hama Sijills</i>
12.45 – 14.15	lunch
14.15 – 15.45	Constructing Social Hierarchies: The Labeling and (Self-)Representation of Individuals Claudia Gazzini (University of Oxford): <i>Away from Court but in the Registers: How Emancipated Slaves and Libyan Women are Represented in the Sijillat of Tripoli, Libya.</i>
15.45 – 16.00	break
16.00 – 17.00	Round Table Discussion: <i>Social Markers and Hierarchies in Perspective: Opportunities and Limitations of the Sijills</i> Chair: Hassan Mwakimako (ZMO)

Saturday, October 18, 2008

9.30 – 11.00	Legal Practice, Record Keeping, and Translating Judicial Proceedings Boğaç Ergene (University of Vermont): <i>Why did Ummu Gulsum Go to Court? Ottoman Legal Practice Between History and Anthropology</i>
	Iris Agmon (Ben-Gurion University): <i>Practicing New Recording Methods, Jaffa, 1876</i>

11.00 – 11.15	break
11.15 – 12.45	Integrating Social Groups and the Formation of Power Relations Abdul-Karim Rafeq (The College of William & Mary): <i>Religious Integration in the Syrian Guilds. Revealed in the Court Records (16th – 19th Centuries)</i> Richard van Leeuwen (University of Amsterdam): <i>Court Records, Waqfs, and the Formation of Power</i>
12.45 – 14.15	lunch
14.15 – 15.15	Round Table Discussion: <i>Transmission of Popular Legal Knowledge, Judicial Consultation and Strategy</i> Chair: Gudrun Krämer (Free University Berlin)
15.15 – 15.30	break
15.30 – 17.00	Being a non-Muslim at Court: Negotiating Legal Autonomy Richard Wittmann (Orient Institute Istanbul): <i>The Qadi, the Chief Rabbi, and the Wife of the Jewish Notable: Social and Judicial Complexities in Late 17th Century Istanbul</i> Rossitsa Gradeva (American University in Bulgaria): <i>The Qadi Court Records on Restoration of non-Muslim Houses of Worship: Sofia, Vidin and Ruscuk (late 17th-early 18th centuries)</i>

Sunday, October 19, 2008

10.00 – 10.45	Approaching the Sijill from the Edge of the Empire Selma Zečević (York University): <i>'Hogetto fatto da Ahmet Efendi Kadi di Mostaro/...': Archiving Ottoman Court Documents in the Turkish Chancellery of the Republic of Dubrovnik</i>
10.45 – 11.30	Round Table Discussion: <i>The Challenge of Legal Fiction</i> Chair: Astrid Meier (University of Zurich)
11.30.11.45	break
11.45 – 12.45	Round Table and Final Discussion: <i>Transregional Comparison and Future Research Avenues</i>