INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
JEWISH-ISLAMIC FORUM OF THE ACADEMY OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM BERLIN

This conference is a window into an area of scholarship that has hitherto been largely overlooked in Germany. It is jointly convened by the W. Michael Blumenthal Academy of the Jewish Museum Berlin and the “Research Network Re-Configurations. History, Remembrance and Transformation Processes in the Middle East and North Africa”, located at Philipps-Universität Marburg, in cooperation with the Center for Jewish Studies Berlin-Brandenburg and “Europe in the Middle East – The Middle East in Europe” (EUME), a research program at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

Recent years have seen a growing interest in Jews from Arab or Muslim majority countries of the Middle East and North Africa across a variety of time periods. Scholars working at Western or Israeli universities often focus on aspects of Jewish communal and political life in Muslim majority countries prior to their exodus in the aftermath of the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948, or on their absorption into the margins of Israeli society in subsequent decades and the increasing role of Mizrahi Jews in contemporary Israeli politics and culture. But there is also a growing trend in research that reaches beyond nationalistic or communalist narratives to conceptualize Jewish communities in Middle Eastern countries as parts of local societies and evolving nation states. Moreover, a tradition of Jewish Studies exists in various Arab and Muslim majority countries that is largely separated from Western scholarship. Some North African and Middle Eastern countries, like Tunisia and Iraq, have seen a renewed interest in the Jewish heritage of the country, and Jewish contributions to national history.

Bringing together established and younger scholars from different continents and academic disciplines, the conference discusses questions of culture, identity and memory of Jewish life in Arab and Muslim majority countries, self-identification and belonging, as well as prospects for ethno-religious diversity and intercommunal relations in the MENA region.

THE RESEARCH NETWORK RE-CONFIGURATIONS. HISTORY, REMEMBRANCE AND TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

The “Research Network Re-Configurations. History, Remembrance and Transformation Processes in the Middle East and North Africa” is a research unit located at Philipps-Universität Marburg’s Centre for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, BMBF). “Re-Configurations” provides an institutional framework for an innovative, interdisciplinary, comparative, empirically-founded, and theory-led investigation of the transformation processes in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region).

THE JEWISH-ISLAMIC FORUM OF THE ACADEMY OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM BERLIN

With a multilayered program of conferences, workshops, panel discussions, readings and screenings, the Jewish-Islamic Forum provides a platform for discussing religious philosophy and practice and the history of Jewish-Islamic relations both in the Muslim world and in Europe. Questions confronting Jews and Muslims as religious minorities in secular Christian societies like Germany take on special status.

Relations between Jews and Muslims represent a politically charged, topical issue. Against the backdrop of the impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Europe, we seek to strengthen the relationship between the two minorities in Germany and overcome mutual prejudices. The Jewish-Islamic Forum aims to counter a dichotomous perception of Judaism and Islam, and to reveal common ground from a comparative perspective, without neglecting unique and specific qualities of each.

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PROGRAM

24 OCTOBER 2017

11:00-12:30

PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND MUSLIM-MUSLIM RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY FROM HEBRON

Chair: Rob Fiske

12:45–14:15

BREAK

14:00–15:30

MINORITY-MINORITY RELATIONS: EASTERN CHRISTIAN PERCEPTIONS OF JEWS AND JUDAISM

Chair: Georges Khalti

15:45–17:15

BREAK

25 OCTOBER 2017

9:00–10:45

Panel 1: Between Dhimmi Status and Convivencia

Chair: Amnon Baz-Rakotzkin / Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beersheba

Keratin Hœnfeldt / Free University Berlin

Jürgen Strauss Leer – An Analytical Insight into the Pseudepigraphic Letters of Protection from Yemen and their Jewish Authors' Strategies of Misrepresentation

Nirvan Freland / Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Jews’ Response to their Dhimmi Status

10:45–12:00

Panel 2: Majority-Minority Relations: Muslim Perceptions of Jews and Judaism

Chair: Weid Anil El Goumri / Michael Blumenthal Fellow

Liran Yadur / University of Tel Aviv

On the Images of Jews in the Eyes of the Iranians during the 20th Century

Orly Rahmian / Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and Ben Zvi Institute

Menashe Ari / Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Thespians and Anti-Thespians in Baian, Jews, Muslims and Booklets in Arabic

12:00–14:00

Break

14:00–15:30

Panel 3: Minority-Minority Relations: Eastern Christian Perceptions of Jews and Judaism

Chair: Georges Khalti / Forum Transregionale Studies, Berlin

Alexandra Cuffe / Ruhr-University Bochum

Jewish-Christian Relations from the Fatimid-Empire to the Ottoman Period: A Methodological Assessment

Carsten Malberg / Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

Alliances Towards Judaism and Jews in Early Modern Christian Arab Literature (1600-1860)

15:45–17:15

Panel 4: Media Geography and Identity Politics

Chair: Sophie Wagenhofer / Evgenia Walter Department

Mihail Kazidov / Centre of Russian Folklore, Moscow

The Karaites and Rabbanite Jews in the Tatar and Ottoman Crimes in the Early Modern Times: The Legal Status and Relations with Muslim Authorities

Hakan T. Karabacak / University of Chicago

Jewish Perspectives on the Ottoman Polity: A Methodological Assessment

Ahmed Dallal / George Washington University

The Jews of Yemen: Interrelated Identities and the Distortions of Contemporary Historiography

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26 OCTOBER 2017

9:15–10:00

Panel 5: Jewish Spaces in the Ottoman Empire

Chair: Gudrun Krämer / Freie Universität Berlin

Menachem Klein / Bar-Ilan University

Jews and Arabs in the Main Palestinian Cities in the Late Ottoman Period

Harvey E. Göbel / Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Symbolic Role of the Jews in the Struggle between State and Society in Late Ottoman Libya

Michelle Campos / University of Florida

Religious Jewish Spaces in Places in the Modern Middle East

10:15–10:45

Panel 6: Jews in Pre-Modern Iran

Chair: Tei Til / Freie Universität Berlin

Alberto Tiburcio / Philipps-Universität Marburg

A Reconstruction of Sources on Jewish Communities in Iran (1666-1807)

Mohammed Ali Tabataba’i & Heidar Eyvazi / Reconsideration of Sources on Jewish Communities in Iran (1666-1807)

10:45–11:00

Break

11:00–12:00

Panel 7: Jews in Pre-Modern Iran

Chair: Tei Til / Freie Universität Berlin

Alberto Tiburcio / Philipps-Universität Marburg

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Mohammed Ali Tabataba’i & Heidar Eyvazi / Reconsideration of Sources on Jewish Communities in Iran (1666-1807)

12:00–14:00

Lunch

14:00–15:30

Panel 8: Contemporary Cultures of Remembrance in Literature and Film – Part 1

Chair: Achim Rohde / Philipps-Universität Marburg

Ronen Zeidel / Tel Aviv University

On the Last Jews in Israel and Their National Identity: A Look at Two Recent Iraqi Novels

Mazin Al-Baghdadi

Yahid Al-Eraqi 2013: Safiyya, Thaqiyya, Akhmadiyah (Arabic with Translation)

15:45–16:45

BREAK

27 OCTOBER 2017

9:00–11:30

Young Scholars Forum (Open for Invited Participants Only)

Speakers:

Iskander Ahmed Abdulai, Bratem Giwaish, Amr Riza Haggabalgh, Katharine Hallis, Ilker Haykans, Tamir Karkason, Ariane Sadjed

Tutors:

Orli Bashkin / University of Chicago


Stefanie Schüler-Springorum / Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung, TU Berlin

11:30–13:30

Closing Session