

Workshop

The Possibilities of Arab-Jewish Thought Berlin June 25 – 27, 2014

Venue: Forum Transregionale Studien, Wallotstr. 14, 14193 Berlin

Objectives

The question of the Arab Jew evoked a growing amount of attention in recent years, both in popular and in academic circles, in Israel and Palestine, and in the Arab World. Dozens of academic works, novels, memoirs and documentaries have been written and produced in the past few years - creating a growing body of knowledge that sheds light on the history of Jewish presence in the Middle East before and beyond 1948.

Revisiting this multifaceted history of the Mizrahi, the oriental Jews, may offer perspectives beyond the conceptual limits of modern Jewish and Arab historiography, cultural and political imagination, and the binary logic of "Jews" and "Arabs".

The recent collection of essays, "Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought" edited by Zvi Ben Dor and Moshe Behar is the first volume to include a larger variety of writings by Jewish intellectuals from the Eastern parts of the Ottoman Empire that emerged in a period where the contemporary boundaries in the Middle East have taken shape. The volume offers the opportunity to revisit some of the main aspects of the distinctions and connections of the Jew and the Arab in modern History.

The term 'Arab Jew' was introduced into the Israeli debate by figures like Shimon Balas, Ella Shohat, Sami Shalom Shetrit and Yehuda Shenhav, and was subject to multiple interpretations and various conceptual frameworks, representing different and sometimes contradictory political agendas.

During the Berlin workshop we would like to discuss the modern history of Arab Jewish thought, the idea of the Arab Jew, and the possibilities that Arab-Jewish thinking offers for the future of Palestine and Israel.

Due to limited capacities, we kindly ask for registration (eume@trafo-berlin.de).

The Possibilities of Arab-Jewish Thought—Schedule:

Wednesday, 25 June	EUME Berliner Seminar
17.00 – 19.00	<p>Yuval Evri (Tel Aviv University / EUME Fellow 2013-14)</p> <p>Translating Arab-Jewish Tradition: From Al-Andalus to Palestine</p> <p>Chair: Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin (Ben Gurion University of the Negev / EUME)</p>
Thursday, 26 June	Workshop
10.00 – 12.30	<p>Panel: Arab Jewish Worlds</p> <p>Islam Dayeh (Zukunftphilologie / Freie Universität Berlin), Taha Hussain, Israel Wolfensohn and the Construction of the Arab Jew</p> <p>Zvi Ben-Dor (NYU), Between Muhammad 'Abduh and Rabindranath Tagore: The Connected Worlds of Hayyim Ben-Kiki, an Arab-Jew</p> <p>Haya Bambaji-Sasportas (Ben-Gurion University), Elie Kedourie and the Criticism of Imperialism</p> <p>Chair: Georges Khalil (Forum Transregionale Studien / EUME)</p>
13.30 – 14.30	<p>The Possibility of Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought</p> <p>Moshe Behar (University of Manchester)</p> <p>Zvi Ben-Dor (NYU)</p> <p>Chair: Refqa Abu-Rumeileh (EUME Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung)</p>
14.45 – 15.45	<p>Yehouda Shenhav (Tel Aviv University), The Political Implications of the Arab-Jewish Identity</p> <p>Chair: Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin</p>
Friday, 27 June	Workshop & Panel Discussion
10.00 – 11.30	<p>Viola Shafiq (Kairo/Berlin), Eastern Jews in Contemporary Arab Filmmaking</p> <p>Najat Abdulhaq (Berlin), Rethinking Narratives: The Emergence of the “Arab Jew” in Contemporary Arabic Literature</p> <p>Chair: Yuval Evri</p>
11.30 – 13.00	<p>Ella Shohat (NYU), The Question of Judeo-Arabic(s): Itineraries of Belonging</p> <p>Chair: Yasir Suleiman (University of Cambridge)</p>
14.00 – 16.00	<p>The Arab/Jew and the Question of Israel/Palestine</p> <p>Panel Discussion:</p> <p>Moshe Behar (Manchester)</p> <p>Elias Khoury (Beirut)</p> <p>Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin (Ber Sheva)</p> <p>Ella Shohat (NYU)</p> <p>Raif Zreik (Haifa University)</p>

Europe in the Middle East – The Middle East in Europe (EUME) **

EUME is a multi-disciplinary research program that seeks to rethink key concepts and premises that link and divide Europe from the Middle East. Within the framework of five research fields in the disciplines of Literature, Political Philosophy, Urban History, Philology-cum-Late Antiquity, and Islamic Studies, the program attempts to recollect the legacies of Europe in the Middle East and of the Middle East in Europe in an inclusive way that aims to do justice to their entanglements.

The program draws on the international expertise of scholars in and outside of Germany and is embedded in university and extra-university research institutions in Berlin. It has been initiated in 2006 by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. It builds upon the previous work of the Working Group Modernity and Islam (1996–2006). Since 2011 EUME is continued as a project at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

Forum Transregionale Studien**

The **Forum Transregionale Studien** is a Berlin-based research platform that connects systematic and region-specific questions in a perspective that addresses entanglements and interactions beyond national, cultural or regional frames. The Forum works in tandem with established institutions and networks that are engaged in transregional studies and is supported by an association of the directors of universities, research institutes and networks mainly based in Berlin. It supports four research programs: ARTHISTORIES AND AESTHETIC PRACTICES, RECHTSKULTUREN: Confrontations beyond Comparison, ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship, and EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME). The Forum Transregionale Studien cooperates with the Max Weber Stiftung and is funded through a public-private partnership.

*For more information on EUME please see: www.eume-berlin.de

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