



Great Expectations: Changing Politics and the Challenge of Research Data Management



Academic research has always been under public scrutiny and subject to occasional attacks, justified or unjustified, by fellow researchers, politicians, activists and the broader public. In recent years, though, the debate has intensified. As we noted in the previous bulletin, anti-intellectualism and distrust in experts are on the rise, stirred in part by populist political forces. Prominent cases of plagiarism and other violations of good scientific practice have also contributed to greater demands that research and research data be publicly accountable and accessible. Academics are pushed to share the raw data that led to their conclusions, the understandable rationale being that such transparency will enhance the verifiability and ultimately the authority of the results and the academics who produced them.

Whether we like it or not, research data management has become the talk of the town. European policymakers have decided to make transparency and accountability the pillars of the upcoming EU research programme »Horizon Europe« (2021-2027). Research bodies (notably the German Research Foundation), broad scientific societies and associations such as Leibniz and disciplinary associations have also been drawn into the debate. This has led to a number of new guidelines on how to collect, store and share research data. The Guidelines on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice, adopted by the Leibniz Association on 29 November 2018, now suggest to all Leibniz institutes and researchers to »fully [document] all steps and results of an experiment or research study and [keep] protocols and research data securely« (§2.1). And while at first sight there is little to take issue with, the matter is not as straightforward as it might seem.

First, there is the question of disciplinary differences. Those working in the humanities and social sciences have faced vigorous public scrutiny and criticism, not least because their results are more open to interpretation. Their usefulness is also more easily called into doubt. As the draft of »Horizon Europe« suggests, efforts to increase public accountability can lead to a shift of funding towards applied research, which is easier to justify to the public than the kind of basic



research carried out by most historians and anthropologists. What is more, the very notion of what counts as »data« differs in different disciplines. In the humanities and social sciences, research data cannot be narrowly understood as survey data, measured data or intermediary data that can easily be distinguished from published results; data include annotated forms of representation and critical editions of historical sources.¹

Many of the professional associations related to the key disciplines at the ZMO have been

more cautious about calls to make research data broadly available.² While verifiability is an important concern to both researchers and the public, it must be regarded in context. There are large amounts of data that cannot or should not be made available at all: data whose ownership rights are unclear or whose owners (including many archives) do not want them shared; data that have been offered on the condition of personal use only; data that can be understood only in context; data that infringe on the privacy of individuals and institutions; and data that are politically sensitive and would put interlocutors in danger (because they can be traced back to their sources even when anonymised).

In these cases, responsibility towards our partners in the field weighs more heavily than calls for transparency – even if this approach will satisfy neither fellow academics who claim that you cannot call yourself a scientist if you do not share your primary data nor politicians who believe that »open science« (the latest buzzword in Brussels) is the only way to reinforce the public's trust in academia.

At the ZMO, where the bulk of research is qualitative rather than quantitative, we have intensely debated these questions. Most data used at the institute are interviews, archival records, field notes, photographs and audio-visual media, which are full of personal information and greatly dependent on context. Such data must be protected and cannot be made freely accessible. Where ownership, politics and other reasons stated above do not apply, there is little reason not to share one's data – after all, the calls for transparency and accountability are not unfounded. Quantitative data that can be aggregated

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1 Verband der Historiker und Historikerinnen Deutschlands e.V., Positionspapier des Verbandes der Historiker und Historikerinnen Deutschlands (VHD) zur Schaffung nationaler Forschungsdateninfrastrukturen, p. 2, see <https://www.historikerverband.de//de/verband/stellungnahmen/positionspapier-zur-schaffung-nationaler-forschungsdateninfrastrukturen-nfdi.html>.

2 de Koning, M. et al., Guidelines for anthropological research: Data management, ethics and integrity, *Ethnography*, 2018, see <https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138119843312>; Dilger, H., Ethics, epistemology, and ethnography: the need for an anthropological debate on ethical review processes in Germany, *Sociologus* 67, 2 (2017), 191-208; Pels, P. (ed.), Data management for anthropologists: the next phase in ethics governance?, *Social Anthropology* 26/3 (2018), 391-413.

Claiming and Making Muslim Worlds: Across and Between the Local and the Global International Conference, ZMO, Berlin, 3-5 April 2019 // Dietrich Reetz



For three days, participants from a variety of countries and research institutions vividly discussed ways of claiming and making Muslim worlds in diverse settings.

In eight panel discussions, they analysed ideas and practices of world order from South Asia and the Middle East, making Muslim spaces in regions like the Sahel-Sahara and the Indian Ocean, Central Asia and Southeast Asia, shaping the moral economy in Muslim countries, applying religious and non-religious norms to transitional justice, looking back at Muslim liminality in Berlin history between the wars and discussing concepts from the global Muslim South.

The presentations drew on and were inspired by research conducted at ZMO between 2008 and 2019 in its research programme *Muslim Worlds – World of Islam? Conceptions, Practices, and Crisis of the Global* funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Beside current and former ZMO researchers, scholars from various German and international institutions participated.

The director, Professor Ulrike Freitag, welcomed the participants and highlighted the dynamics and challenges of the outgoing research programme, notably the contestation between perspectives of Muslim worlds and Islam. Professor Seema Alavi delivered the keynote lecture »Muslim Cosmopolitanism and the Writing of World History«. She discussed the intercultural experiences of the Indian Muslim cleric Haji Imdadullah Makki in the 19th century, who hid in the Arabian Peninsula from British persecution for his role in the 1857 rebellion against British rule in India. As Mecca and Medina were under Ottoman rule at the time, he used the imperial contestation to strive for inclusive space for his own discourse and institutions.

The conference reached out to the German-speaking public through a roundtable discussion at the conference hall of the Leibniz Society, of which the ZMO is a member. The roundtable discussants sought to enquire into »What are Muslim Worlds? Talking Back to the Global North«. Although all stressed the importance of communicating scientific results rather than preserving them in the ivory tower of the academic community, the different approaches and priorities of academics and journalists also became evident. Panel members emphasised that the primary audiences of their work are different, which also means that different questions are asked. It is not always easy to »translate« findings for a non-academic audience, as complex issues often require more detail (and space or airtime) than is normally available. The very different rhythms of work and writing also caused some controversy about where priorities should lie. Since all agreed on the goal of better communication, this conversation needs to be continued.

Participants of the roundtable discussion, from left: Bekim Agai, Charlotte Wiedemann, Ulrike Freitag, Mamadou Diawara, Claudia Derichs (photo: Annika Büssemeier)



The conference presentations raised a number of crucial questions for further research. In the first panel discussion on religion and ideas of world order, Antía Mato Bouzas enquired what the role of religion is in the making of transnational spaces. She discussed this in regard to migration and development networks between north-eastern Pakistan and the Gulf region, where workers from Baltistan and merchants from Kuwait engaged in recruitment and charity, based on their shared Shi'a faith. Dietrich Reetz discussed the role of religious principles in the current leadership contest between different centres of the missionary movement Tablighi Jama'at in India, Pakistan and the wider Muslim world. Lorenzo Casini highlighted the role of religious references in three different Arabic novels from Egypt and Kuwait.

In the second panel discussion on governing the Sahel-Sahara region, Britta Frede looked at the on-going process of governing Islam through the lens of the local religious teaching institution Mahdara, which has existed in the region for centuries. She argued that conflicting interest groups involved in the process limit the options of governing Islamic institutions. Judith Scheele focused on the problems of governance in northern Mali, which is currently controlled by radical Islamist groups. She proposed to understand this conflict not only in terms of political tension between different political groupings at the centre and their opponents in the north, but also as part of the longer historical tradition of transregional religious engagement and self-articulation. Abdoulaye Sounaye highlighted the growing impact of policies of de-radicalisation in the French-speaking Sahel region. This led to political arrangements with former rebel groups, on the one hand, and increased securitization of state authorities, along with structured »de-radicalization« programmes, on the other, where radical groups are claiming and contesting space denied by governing elites.

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and anonymised can and should also be fed into public repositories. What is more, there is little doubt that researchers would be wise to preserve their raw data in case of queries about the scientific validity of their

research. But preservation is not the same as public access and proactive sharing. A call that works for the physical sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics does not automatically make sense for the

humanities and social sciences. This is all the more true for an institute frequently working on (and in) conflict and post-conflict situations across Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Stefan B. Kirmse

In panel discussion three on Muslim spaces in the Indian Ocean, historical perspectives dominated. Sebastian Prange analysed how the religious, legal and political discourses of Muslim merchant communities on the West Indian Malabar Coast underwent changes in the 16th century, so that a Muslim political and religious narrative became dominant and opposition to Portuguese rule was considered obligatory. Scott Reese discussed the importance of print in Muslim societies on the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region in the late 19th century. He argued that print became a transformative medium shaping the modern Umma as it is known today. Tika Ramadhini analysed the impact of the religious education that female pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies, today's Indonesia, obtained during their travel to Mecca in the late 19th and early 20th century, which they often prolonged to study Islam.

In panel discussion four on multi-centric flows in Muslim worlds, the panellists added perspectives on Central Asia and Southeast Asia. Rebecca Gould engaged with Soviet literary renderings of the forced migration of Muslims from the Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire and later to Soviet Central Asia. The Islamic concept of Hijra was used to construct cultural bridges between past and present and to give space to debates otherwise censored. Sumit Mandal focused on the new Malay tradition of Selawat songs and concerts as a genre of Islamic devotional music that was successfully promoted by an Indonesian of Arab descent, Habib Syech, in the 2010s. Habib's engagement contributed to a Muslim narrative that centres on the Malay world in general and Indonesia in particular. Panel discussion five challenged the moral economies of resource valuation and extraction. Patrick Schukalla demonstrated how government and society in Tanzania were struggling for moral narratives and practices that would legitimise exploring for and preparations for mining uranium – an often understudied element of the cycle of the nuclear-fuel industry. Erdem Evren analysed the moral aspects surrounding the planning and construction of mega-dams, small-scale hydroelectric power plants, and mining projects connected with large transfers of private and communal lands that faced both acceptance and resistance. Julien Brachet described the moral dilemmas and contradictions surrounding the mining of natron salt in northern Chad. As one of the very few local natural resources, it generated a struggle for control among local workers, leaders, military personnel, and administration officials.

In panel discussion six on transitional justice, Susanne Buckley-Zistel analysed the trends in the creation of memorials to



The ZMO conference hall - a worthy frame for the conference (photo: Annika Büssemeier)

commemorate acts and periods of violence such as fascism in Germany and recent developments in Rwanda and Bosnia since the 1970s. She emphasised the normative shifts they promote and the politics they transport. Brahim El Guabli introduced present literature written by Moroccan Islamists who not only reflected on the violence the state metes out to Islamist groups, but also sought to contribute to reconfiguring social memory according to their views. Farzana Haniffa reflected on the recent radical evolution of Muslim discourse in Sri Lanka after the end of the Tamil conflict, when Muslims who are mostly also Tamil increasingly became targets of Sinhalese Buddhist reprisal attacks, which have challenged the process of transitional justice.

In panel discussion seven on Muslim lives in the interwar period in Berlin, Peter Wien introduced the memoirs of an Egyptian Communist, Husni al-'Urabi, who lived in exile in Berlin in the 1930s, and the diverse and partly extreme cultural, social and political experiences he encountered. In comparison, David Motadel reflected on the larger community of nationalist politicians from colonised countries in exile in Berlin between 1941 and 1945 and the tensions and conflicts that their desire to promote anticolonial resistance with the help of Nazi Germany created for them and others.

In panel discussion eight on intellectual inquiries from the Muslim Global South, Nils Riecken discussed the »situated universalism« in the works of the contemporary Moroccan historian and intellectual Abdallah Laroui, who situated the established categories of Islamic, Western, premodern and modern histories in a political relationship not as opposites, but as different readings of history. Anaheed Al-Hardan revisited the emergence of South-South solidarity in the Arab world in the 1950s and '60s, which he argued should serve as a point of departure for a South-South genealogy of Arab anticolonial critique. Abdulkader Tayob contended that the Muslim intellectual traditions of modernity should not be analysed (only) through

the lens of Western concepts of religion, by Kant, Marx, or Weber, and proposes to use the former also to analyse the latter.

The concluding panel discussion highlighted the crosscutting themes of Muslim world-making. Dietrich Reetz emphasised that several papers showed that those claims were the reflection of real or perceived disadvantages that people face in the Muslim worlds. In this sense, world-making was giving meaning to interventions in the name of Islam and Muslims to create cultural and material capital for those claims. It also became clear that Muslim worlds cannot be reduced to a single practice or single mode of operation and that religious activity is also social activity. Many religious claims are claims for social and cultural and political space, seeking recognition, acceptance and legitimacy. In this connection, it is important that those interventions concerned highly diverse issues and topics, such as literature, welfare, memory, geography, history, natural resources, violence and justice. The papers also revealed very different dimensions of Muslimness playing out in competing and overlapping scenarios, where actors and institutions identified themselves as Muslim by association, belief, practice, birth, or culture.

Jeanine Dağyeli highlighted that this conference unfolded multiple facets of what it might mean to think of and inhabit Muslim worlds. By focusing on complex life-worlds, the conference »Claiming and Making Muslim Worlds: Across and Between the Local and the Global« ran counter to many popular clichés about Muslims, the essentialist image of Islam and the near-exclusive Western identification of Muslims with the Middle East. In that sense, it was a badly needed intervention in the current, increasingly narrowed debate about what Islam and Muslim are and what makes Muslim worlds Muslim.

It is planned to publish a volume of papers from the conference. The keynote lecture and the roundtable talk are also available on ZMO's YouTube channel.

■ Lecture Series

ZMO Colloquium 2019/2020: Thinking and Re-Thinking the World in the Decolonial Era: Thinkers and Theorising from the Global South

Building on the conviction that far too many intellectual cultures, intellectual histories and theoretical contributions of individual thinkers from economically and politically marginalised regions of the world in the so-called Global South are still little known, underexplored and undervalued – and that the dominance of conceptual Eurocentrism needs to be reined in and overcome – this lecture series seeks to redress that imbalance in scholarship and public consciousness. As speakers, we invite various thinkers from the South (academics, public intellectuals and critical activists) engaged in their practically relevant fields of knowledge production and political contestation to present their specific theoretical approaches and programmatic agendas.

We also seek to hear from those situated at the nexus between theory and (reforms of) practice and from academics involved in relevant collaborative projects and in related policy-building and decision-making to provide their own original, critical accounts of the potential power of renewed theorising in an entangled postcolonial world; to present relevant theories and discuss conceptual approaches; and to elaborate on their initiatives on South-South or South-North collaborations that work to alleviate and overcome Eurocentric dominance. In the process, we must also continue to question and reassess the heuristic, ethical and other value of employing the concept of North-South divisions as a leitmotif; while helpful for some aspects, it might be too sim-

plistic and too generalising for others. We seek to present a selection of speakers who are based in Germany and active along these lines or in countries of the Global South and/or engaged in South-South partnerships, as we are particularly interested in hearing and discussing more about how theoretical demands and practical dedication to change interrelate. The colloquium starts in September 2019 and the following speakers and dates have been confirmed: Claudia Derichs (HU Berlin), 26 September; Seteney Shami (SSRC, New York), 31 October; Rakesh Pandey (CSDS New Delhi), 28 November; Felwine Sarr (UGB Saint-Louis, Senegal), 11 December; Saleem Badat (Mellon Foundation), 30 January; Nahed Samour (HU Berlin), 27 February. *Kai Kresse*

Lecture Series 2019/2020: Central Eurasian Studies and Translocality – A Debate Unfolding

While Central Eurasia, by definition, lies at the heart of the Eurasian continent, it tends to be treated as a peripheral region at the edge of overlapping cultural spaces, such as the post-Soviet, Turkic and Muslim worlds. It tends to be exoticised and perceived as an area of transit and transition, an object of Great Power politics (the »Great Game«), a religious and ethnic powder keg and a playground for eccentric autocrats and their kin. It is commonly framed in terms of its distant and recent pasts (being examined predominantly as »post-Soviet«, »post-socialist« or as part of the ancient and modern Silk Roads), while elements of culture – Islam, clan networks etc.

– are frequently foregrounded in the analysis. The exoticisation and peripheralisation of the region are also reflected in academia. Mainstream disciplines, including history, anthropology and political science, take little notice of debates and developments in Central Eurasian Studies (which is institutionally weak in Germany); regionally and thematically defined fields such as East European, Turkic, Islamic and Asian Studies also treat the region as peripheral and continue to address it in passing, at best. These developments stand in stark contrast to the surge in scholarship on Central Eurasia over the last two decades, with fast-growing numbers of dissertations,

publications and international conferences. The preparation of the ZMO's new research programme *Thinking through translocal entanglements* (2020-2024) offers an excellent opportunity to integrate Central Eurasia into the heart of the debate.

The lecture series will start on 21 October 2019 and last until July 2020. It will bring doctoral and postdoctoral scholars working on Central Eurasia to the ZMO and allow them to present their research in the context of the centre's unfolding discussions of translocality. A series of ten events is planned on Mondays at 5 pm that will reflect a range of disciplines, countries and career stages. *Stefan B. Kirmse*

■ Conferences & Workshops

Liminal Spaces as Sites of (Alternative) Knowledge Production: A Report on Work in Progress, 25-28 April 2019, Lodz

In the current authoritarian climate in the Arab World, where are spaces that allow the creation and exchange of alternative knowledge? Such spaces are often of liminal, which means that, far from providing stable and structured environments for creative processes, they are improvised and often short-lived. The investigation of such creative physical and virtual spaces is the topic of a collaborative project between researchers from Egypt, Morocco, Palestine, Germany, and other countries, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation

from January 2018 to December 2020. Part of the collaborative project is regular meetings, themselves liminal spaces of exchange and knowledge creation. The latest such meeting took place at the University of Lodz from 25-28 April, hosted by the project's affiliated researcher Dorota Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska. In the workshop, the three main axes of research – 1. creative/artistic spaces; 2. virtual spaces/citizen media; and 3.



Participants in front of the Department of Middle East and North Africa at the University of Lodz (photo: Krzysztof Olkusz)

migrant/refugee spaces – were comparatively discussed with a focus on which knowledge is produced.

Yazid Anani and Abed Shabaneh presented their critical examination of the term *solidarity*, which focuses on alternative knowledge production in the realm of culture and arts in Palestine. An event organised during the Qalandiya International Art Biennale in Ramallah tackled the question of how different unaffiliated artist and activist groups understand solidarity. This bottom-up approach was contrasted with the more normative notions of the Palestinian Authority and the UNWRA. Two understandings stand out: first, a nostalgic vision of solidarity from the 1960s and 70s (with notions of anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism) that is not related to the current situation; and second, a vision powerfully inspired by the Egyptian revolution, yet not connected to the Palestinian Intifadas. An alternative manifesto of solidarity that fosters this debate in the local Palestinian context shall be the outcome of this experimental research – and itself presents a production of »alternative knowledge«.

A different approach to alternative knowledge production investigates humour and translation as tools of resistance in the realm of citizen media. Dina Oleimy's work on the Facebook pages of Egyptian cartoonists and Menna Mansy's project on online activist communities that counter Jihadi narratives illuminate new modes of engagement post-2014 in the form of ephemeral media productions by unstructured, unrecognisable groups in a situation characterised by increasing restrictions and censorship. These engagements also become visible in the physical spaces of Cairo, as Randa Aboubakr's case study of the urban linguistic translation practices on Cairo shop signs and billboards shows. As it emerged in the discussion, in the temporary spaces thus created, the actors also develop very practical knowledge on how to navigate censorship.

The knowledge produced about migrant/refugee spaces is often primarily functional and situational to counter the constraints of the migrant's situation. Houda Douali illustrated this with her work on mapping the

emotions of sub-Saharan migrants who are stuck in Tangier in northern Morocco on their way to Europe. This also holds true for the migrants who work as street vendors in Morocco's capital Rabat between the old and new town, as Majda Frandi documented in her photographic research. The street where they have set up temporary structures emerged as an unstable economic space that leaves them vulnerable; yet, it also provides a space for exchange among migrants. »Al-bainiyya« was suggested as a possible Arabic translation for such liminality. Yet the liminal condition as it was outlined is more than just an in-between status or a transition from one place to another and could also be understood as a transformative movement.

In the final discussion, the question of *visions of the future* – and how these are reassembled in unclear situations with uncertain futures – emerged as a linking theme. The topic will be pursued in smaller intermediary workshops on both migration and media productions this fall, as well as during the next collective meeting in Morocco in spring 2020. Sarah Jurkiewicz

Lost and Gained on the Way: Placing ›Transit‹ Migration in Europe, Africa and Africa, 13-14 May 2019, ZMO

More than twenty scholars from diverse disciplinary and national backgrounds came together at ZMO to critically discuss the notion of ›transit‹ migration. The conference »Lost and Gained on the Way: Placing ›Transit‹ Migration in Europe, Africa and Africa, convened by Hilal Alkan and Katharina Lange and supported by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and ZMO, critically intervened in recent academic debates on the notion of ›transit‹ migration.

Placing migrants as active social actors in the centre, the twelve research papers presented at the conference shed light on how migrants balance their aspirations to move on and simultaneously make a life in localities that are demarcated as places of transit. People stuck in places of transit wait – but this is active waiting, as Cathrine Brun (2015) suggests. Drawing on case studies from (among other places) Indonesia, Lebanon, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Turkey, Central Asia, the Baltic States, and Germany, contributions showed that waiting-in-transit is filled with building economic capital; with investing in dwellings that considerable effort may make more homey; with maintaining family relations or making meaningful personal progress through artistic production or sports. Studying may not only help to accumulate social capital that will be helpful when finally moving on, but may also create semblances of ›normality«, as

it provides a way of structuring and making good use of waiting time otherwise seen as ›wasted«. While the notion of transit migration suggests linear and purposeful vectors of motion through space, in many cases migration may be circular or back-and-forth, with not only the aspiration to move, but also conscious refusals to move on, reflecting political positions as much as personal anxieties or structural constraints.

All in all, the comparative perspective of the conference revealed the manifold and creative ways in which migrants inhabit protracted displacement situations, holding on to desires about the future and making do with the limited resources they have access to.

Katharina Lange and Hilal Alkan

Rurality and Future-Making in Europe, the Middle East and the Mediterranean, 22-24 May 2019, University of Cologne

The conference was co-organised by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Cologne, three regional working groups of the German Association of Anthropology and ZMO's research unit The Politics of Resources. Comprising eighteen research papers, three keynote lectures and an exhibi-

tion opening, the conference explored how rurality is achieved, marked and (de-)stabilised in different places in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Europe. The presentations, drawing on research in Morocco, Iran and Kurdistan-Iraq, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Poland and other places, showed the ways in which rural locations that are often imagined as discrete, remote or isolated spaces are not only contingent on an urban »Other«, but on closer scrutiny usually form part of larger, interconnected, often transnational spaces and »regionalities«. The conference underlined that widespread associations of »the rural« with nature/naturalness and authenticity/autochthony continue to provide powerful images and expectations. In many cases, however, these are contradicted by practical developments related to economic shifts and structural change, the industrialisation of agriculture and the increasing significance of tourism or extractive industries. This tension between material, economic and social transformations in many rural locales, on the one hand, and the trope of the rural as a repository of temporal stillness, on the other, may fuel diverse types of political action (ranging from xenophobic or far-right movements to debates about the rights of migrant labourers) and artistic production. In conclusion, the conference demonstrated the usefulness of a comparative or inter-regional perspective that views developments in the Middle East in relation to neighbouring regions across the Mediterranean.

Katharina Lange



■ Other Activities

Annual Meeting of the Archives Working Group of the Leibniz Association, 18-19 March 2019, ZMO



Participants of the AK Archive in front of ZMO's entrance door (photo: Dieter Maschke/Max-Michael Wannags)

On 18 and 19 March, the Archives Working Group (AK Archive, <https://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/en/about-us/organisation/working-groups/ak-archives/>) of the Leibniz Association met at ZMO. It was the 30th meeting since the founding of the group in Hamburg in 2005. This time, it bade farewell to Max-Michael Wannags from the ZBW Leibniz-Information Centre for Economics, Hamburg and welcomed Joachim Neubert as his successor. Matthias Nuding, the speaker of the AK Archive, reported on the yearly meetings of the Leibniz Association and the Permanent Commis-

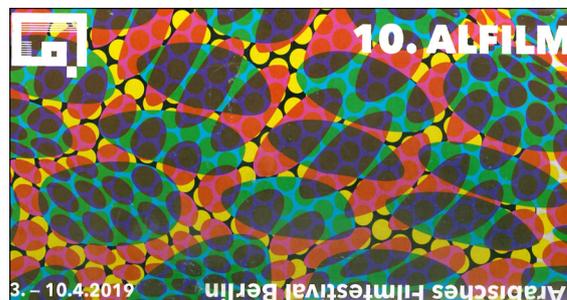
sion for Research Infrastructures and Research Museums (KIM) in November 2018. He also informed the participants on the new Guidelines on the Handling of Research Data within the Leibniz Association, a topic of interest and discussion for the more than twenty institutions represented at the meeting. Sabine Müller of Headquarters spoke on the »Governance of the Leibniz Association« and news from the organisation. Projects were also presented at the meeting: Heike Liebau introduced ZMO's long-term project »Modern India in German Archives« (DFG, https://www.zmo.de/forschung/projekte_2014_2019/modern_india_e.html) and received comments and leads to further materials. Thomas Hörnschemeyer talked about database systems and archiving

research meta-data, taking Senckenberg Nature Research Society as an example. How can we digitally administer collection objects from different areas and located in different places? How can we centralise existing databases and make them accessible to users? At Senckenberg, a full-text search engine accesses various existing databases. Hörnschemeyer explained the challenge of cross-linking data for the modular database DINA. Questions of data standardisation, sequence data, national research infrastructures and other topics were discussed. Matthias Nuding (Germanisches Nationalmuseum, GNM) gave a lively report on the quest for archival information technology at his museum, where the currently running software is to be replaced by a newly developed information technology covering archives, the library and object collections at the same time. The group critically discussed the long-term topic of performance indicators. The meeting ended with reports from individual archives and a tour through the Mittelhof grounds and history.

Silke Nagel

10. ALFILM – Arab Film Festival Berlin, 3-10 April 2019

This year marks the 10th Arab Film Festival in Berlin, ALFILM. The week-long festival from 3 to 10 April provided an excellent opportunity to connect Arab filmmakers with an audience in Berlin and beyond that is interested in Arab film and culture and to give the general public in Berlin, with or without Arab backgrounds, a peek into social and political topics that preoccupy people in this wide region. ALFILM offerings were topically and regionally diverse, from short movies and documentaries to animations and featured drama and comedy films, and from depictions of Arab immigrants in Europe to portrayals of social life in a variety of contexts in the Arab region. As a partner of the festival, ZMO was present, as in every festival before. This year, research fellow Khaled Adham conducted a Q&A with Egyptian independent filmmaker Ahmed Abdallah on his feature film »Night/Exterior«.



The film is a deep social critique of Egyptian society, a hyperrealistic confection of blaring images from Cairo, discordant street noises, popular music genres and flaring sentiments of contestation, violence and affection, all laced into one narrative that takes place on one day in a taxi ride through the city. Three characters from three different social classes and neighbourhoods—a film director, a prostitute and a taxi driver—unexpectedly found themselves on a nocturnal journey. Through their encounters, each breaks out of his or her social bubble, giving the audience rare glimpses of the »dark side« of Cairo's contemporary social life. In a full Arsenal cinema, the Q&A addressed issues of rising social and spatial segregation in Egyptian urban society, social and class tensions and violence, gender issues, institutional oppression and the social imposition of moral codes. The extended duration of the Q&A showed that the event drew considerable interest.

Khaled Adham

The MIDA Online Research Portal, 10 May 2019, ZMO

In the fifth year of its existence, the DFG-funded, long-term project MIDA (*Das Moderne Indien in Deutschen Archiven 1706-1989*) celebrated the launch of its online research portal (Rechercheportal; <https://www.projekt-mida.de/rechercheportal/>). A public event was held on 10 May at the ZMO, Berlin. MIDA started in November 2014 and – provided it leads to successful applications – is planned for a maximum of 12 years until 2026. It is being carried out at three academic institutions: the Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS) at the University of Göttingen, the Institute of Asian and African Studies (IAAW) at the Humboldt University in Berlin and the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO).

MIDA's main aim is to discover and describe collections of archival documents in German institutions that are related to the political, cultural, social or intellectual history of modern India and to the history of Indo-German entanglements. The project starts from the assumption that the abundance, diversity and scientific potential of collections on modern India hosted in German archives have been insufficiently appreciated so far. For the international community of historians of India, these resources can open up new re-

search perspectives that have remained obscured by an excessive fixation on British colonial archives. The largely unexplored source materials not only call for a reconstruction of the history of German-Indian entanglements since the 18th century, they also encourage the development of innovative research questions in comparative and global history, which might be of interest and inspiration for issues of transnational historiography at large.

The MIDA online research portal consists of three parts: a *Database*, an *Archival Reflexicon* and *Thematic Resources*. The database contains systematic information about collections related to modern India in German archives. So far, information on India-related holdings in 11 archives is available, among them such big state institutions as the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, the Bundesarchiv, the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, the Staatsarchiv Hamburg and the Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv Hannover. Besides these large collections, information is also provided on India-related sources in lesser-known archives in Germany, such as the communal Stadtarchiv Halle or the Archiv der Jugendbewegung, Burg Ludwigstein in Witzhausen. The database is an open-access and continuously growing platform.

The second pillar of the research portal, the *Archival Reflexicon*, is an ongoing collection of essays on his-



Launch of the MIDA Online Research Portal 10 May 2019, ZMO

torical or methodological themes and collections. It »is thus a reflexive lexicon – of how to navigate through India-related holdings in German archives, acquire an overview of the same for specific topics, and of how to critically engage with larger theoretical and methodological debates that emerge from the exercise of tracing, extracting, listing, ordering and indexing information« (<https://www.projekt-mida.de/rechercheportal/reflexicon/>).

The third pillar of the MIDA research portal, the *Thematic Resources* rubric, provides research data generated within MIDA, including a list of all

successfully completed India-related PhDs at German universities between 1783 and 2013. The MIDA team is extremely thankful to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) for funding this project, to our three institutions, CEMIS, IAAW and ZMO for hosting it, to the MIDA advisory board for its continuous support and to the service Center eSciences in Trier for developing and providing us with the necessary software. But first, we thank the archives and institutions we have visited so far for their interest in MIDA, their openness and their support. We hope that the already existing and upcoming results will be used intensively by researchers and invite users to get in touch with us with feedback, suggestions or contributions.

Heike Liebau

publications

Book review: Lutz Maeke: *DDR und PLO: die Palästinapolitik des SED-Staates*. Vol. 92, De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2017, 559 p.



DDR und PLO gives an overview of the geopolitical situation between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Middle East during the Cold War. The main focus of the book is the relationship between the GDR and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) between 1949 and 1990. The book is divided into three parts: part A from 1949 until 1972, part B from 1973 until 1978 and part C from 1979 until 1990. The author Lutz Maeke, a historian focused on Middle Eastern politics and security policy, points to the decisive changes in the GDR's Palestine policy during this time.

The core theme of the book is the PLO's key role during the Cold War and the interdependency of the GDR, the PLO and the Federal Republic of Germany. The author analyses the PLO's function as a ping-pong ball between the great powers and Yassir Arafat's strategy to turn the PLO's dependency around for his own political agenda.

DDR and PLO sheds light not only on the GDR's Palestine policies, but also on Arafat's strategic policy in both German states. This becomes clear when the former Chairman of West Germany's Foreign Affairs Committee, Gerhard Schröder, meets with Arafat in 1974 in Damascus, which is documented in the archives of the German Foreign Ministry (p. 172, 180).

The author not only depicts the GDR's view of relations with the PLO, but also describes the numerous inflection points of Arafat's policy and his longing for a political breakthrough in the West (p. 256). Thus, the author quotes from the memoirs of Kissinger: »Arafat was reported to be interested in a dialogue with the United States, which would be based on two promises: that, ›Israel is here to stay‹; and that Jordan should be the home for a Palestinian state [...]« (p. 151).

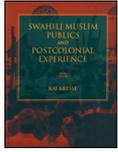
The most interesting part of the book is the revealed disillusion about the relationship between the GDR and the PLO, which turned out to be a calculation, rather than a friendship. The author writes that Erich Honecker, the head of the GDR's government, used the PLO to strengthen his foreign policy while inviting Arafat 1973 to the largest communist World Festival for Youth and Students and to distance himself from the Federal Republic (p. 124). An additional interesting part of the book is the similarities between powers like the Soviet Union, the GDR and Syria, on the one hand,

and the capitalist Western powers such as the Federal Republic, on the other, but also the role of Jordan in Middle Eastern politics and in relation to the PLO.

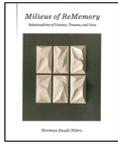
For experts, the detailed reconditioning of the archive material makes this book enriching, whereas readers with limited prior knowledge may get lost in the numerous details and the overwhelming density of the book. This is reflected in the unclear structure and division of the book. Maeke uses subsections on the micro- (»the company ZIBADO«) and macro-level (»2. Lebanon 1982/83«), which lead to confusion and make it difficult for the reader to identify the common theme. Another critical point is the overload of details and background information, which makes grasping the central argument of the book a challenge for the non-expert. *DDR and PLO* is highly recommended. It offers the reader a wide overview of relations between the GDR and the PLO during the Cold War. Unlike what one might expect from the title, the book debates a wide range of connections of the Palestine policy during the Cold War. The author also elaborates the alliances of the Eastern and Western bloc states with Arab states in the Middle East. It is a rewarding book for undergraduate and postgraduate students of history, political science and regional West Asia and North Africa Studies.

Sophie Ataya

■ ZMO Publications



▪ Kresse, Kai (2018): *Swahili Muslim Publics and Postcolonial Experience*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press (African Expressive Cultures), 237p.



▪ Nikro, Norman Saadi (2019): *Milieus of ReMemory. Relationalities of Violence, Trauma, and Voice*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 207p.



▪ Hegasy, Sonja; Nikro, Norman Saadi (Eds.): Special Issue: Memories of Violence, Social Live and Political Culture in the Maghreb and Mashreq. *Memory Studies* 12 (3), June 2019.

■ ZMO Programmatic Texts

▪ Schielke, Samuli (2019): The power of God. Four proposals for an anthropological engagement. *Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient*. Berlin (ZMO Programmatic Texts, 13). http://www.zmo.de/publikationen/ProgrammaticTexts/programmatic_text_13.pdf.

■ ZMO Working Paper

▪ Framke, Maria; Möller, Esther (2019): From local philanthropy to political humanitarianism: South Asian and Egyptian humanitarian aid during the period of decolonisation. *Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient*. Berlin (ZMO Working Papers, 22). http://www.zmo.de/publikationen/WorkingPapers/framke_moeller_2019.pdf.

■ Open Access Publications

▪ Hegasy, Sonja (2019): Creating a Common Memory Space. In: Udo Steinbach (Ed.): *Europe and the Mediterranean. Talking, Learning, Working, and Living Together 7*. München, Berlin (Europa Bottom-Up – Arbeitspapiere zur Europäischen Zivilgesellschaft/ European Civil Society Working Papers, 22), 43–50. <https://web.maecenata.eu/publikationen-europa/europa-bottom-up>.

▪ Nikro, Norman Saadi (2019): AnArChic Archive: Phenomenal Photographs and Multiple Exposures, *Tohu*. <http://tohumagazine.com/article/anarchic-archive-phenomenal-photographs-and-multiple-exposures>.

▪ Roelcke, Annegret (2019). Constructing the Capital of Peace: Changing Branding Strategies for Istanbul's Eyüp Quarter. *Middle East – Topics & Arguments*, 12, special issue »Urban Development«, edited by Christian Steiner and Stefan Wippel, 110-120. <https://doi.org/10.17192/meta.2019.12.7931>.

■ Book reviews

▪ Sarah El-Richani: Book Review, Sarah Jurkiewicz, Blogging in Beirut. An Ethnography of a Digital Media Practice. Bielefeld: transcript, 2018, *Global Media Journal* 8(2), Autumn/Winter 2018, 18.12.2018, <http://globalmediajournal.de/en/2018/12/18/rezension-blogging-in-beirut-an-ethnography-of-a-digital-media-practice/>.

▪ Nazan Maksudyen, Book Review, The Long End of the First World War: Ruptures, Continuities and Memories, ed. by Katrin Bromber, Katharina Lange, Heike Liebau, Anorthe Wetzel, 2018, Frankfurt: Campus, TRAFO – *Blog for Transregional Research* 29.01.2019, <https://trafo.hypotheses.org/17429>.

For more see <https://www.zmo.de/publikationen/index.html>

news

People

ZMO welcomes new faces in 2019. In February, Lena Herzog became Knowledge Transfer Officer. She studied political science in Dresden, Bologna and Osnabrück. For her master thesis, she researched the development of a civil society movement in Beirut. Before joining ZMO, she was a trainee at Wissenschaft im Dialog, where she learned how to effectively communicate science.

In May, as a PhD candidate, Ali Dogan joined the Volkswagen Freigeist project »Learning Intelligence: The Exchange of Secret Service Knowledge between Germany and the Arab Middle East 1960-2010« headed by Dr Sophia Hoffmann. He studied at the LMU in Munich, the METU in Ankara, the HU in Berlin and the IFSH in Hamburg and worked as a consultant in Saudi Arabia. His field of specialization includes international relations and security studies. His PhD project deals with the collaboration between the German Intelligence Service (BND) and Iraqi secret services.

ZMO is also happy to announce the start of our new janitor Mohamed Zine in May 2019, to follow in Petra Engler's footsteps.

The PhD candidates Adejoke Rafiat Adetoro (based in Nigeria) and Bello Adamou Mahamadou (based in Niger), members of the Leibniz Junior Research Group »Remoboko« headed by Dr Abdoulaye Sounaye, stayed at ZMO between April and June for intensive group work and exchange.

Dr Hassan Mwakimako, Associate Professor at the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Pwani University, Kilifi, Kenya and a former colleague from 2006 to 2009, stayed at ZMO from mid-May to mid-June as a visiting researcher.

Sanaa Alimia is leaving ZMO for a position as Assistant Professor at the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations at Aga Khan University, London as of September/October 2019. Judith Scheele is leaving ZMO at the end of August for a professorship at EHESS. Benjamin Vrucak's contract as a coordinator of the joint research project »Normality and Crisis: Memories of Everyday Life in Syria as a Chance for a New Start in Germany« ended in February 2019. After the sudden death of the director Gerd Winkelhane, the academic publisher De Gruyter has taken over Klaus Schwarz Verlag. The Berlin publishing house specialized in Islamic Studies and Arabic Studies joined De Gruyter's portfolio as of 1 April 2019. ZMO had a longstanding publish-

ing partnership with KSV through its series »Arbeitshefte« (http://www.zmo.de/publikationen/zmo_arbeitshefte.html) and »ZMO Studien« (http://www.zmo.de/publikationen/zmo_studien.html).

Networks

ZMO sincerely thanks the King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies for donating electronic copies of the 1937 to 1965 issues of the first Saudi Arabian cultural journal *al-Manhal*. It was founded in 1937 by the well-known Medina author 'Abd al-Qaddūs al-Anṣārī and is an important source for the cultural history of Saudi Arabia. The collection can be accessed via the ZMO website (<https://www.jpberlin.de/zentrummodernerorient/biblio/index.php?record=0&table=alManhal&searchString=manhal&searchBib=true&relation=OR>). A password can be requested from the librarian (Thomas.ripper@zmo.de).

The Centre of Documentation and Research UMAM, a long-term partner of ZMO, launched an online database to improve access to the documents the institution has been collecting for 15 years. (<https://www.umambiblio.org/ar>).

calendar

LECTURE SERIES

ZMO-COLLOQUIUM WINTER TERM 2019/2020: Thinking and Re-Thinking the World in the Decolonial Era, ZMO, 5 PM

- 26 September 2019, Prof. Claudia Derichs (HU Berlin)
- 31 October, 2019, Setenay Shami (SSRC New York)

TAG DER OFFENEN TÜR - TAG DES OFFENEN DENKMALS, 7. September 2019, ZMO & Historische Kommission zu Berlin, ZMO

For more see www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/

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