

Editorial

The violent killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Kashoggi briefly caused international outrage. Less known is the incarceration and torture of dozens of Saudi human rights activists; and, although well-known, the cruel war in Yemen makes only occasional headlines. These are examples from only one corner of the Arab world; they could be multiplied almost at random by looking at any part of Asia and Africa. How can we, as scholars, react to the terrible human rights violations occurring in many of the countries in which we conduct research? Speaking out openly might seem the right thing. Often enough, it not only jeopardises future access, but can also endanger the people who are known to have worked with us. Boycotting academic cooperation out of protest against a regime not only jeopardises our own coopera-

tion with colleagues or friends who might share our views. An extreme case of this is the Arab boycott of Israel, which de facto cuts off academics and artists in the West Bank from international contacts with their immediate surroundings. Should we then just carry on as if nothing at all had happened? We are left with bad choices, and how we will act depends on different external and individual choices. These should be respected as long as they are being made independently. This is one central argument for publicly funded, financially independent research – as opposed to research dependent on sponsors who thereby secure academic acquiescence or, worse, buy academics to whitewash them.

Ulrike Freitag

Trust as a Scarce Public Good

Fellows at ZMO, like their counterparts in other institutions, are concerned about how to deal with the ways scholars are increasingly portrayed in the public as biased and detached from societal concerns. A particular problem is the current fixation on »Islam« and »Muslims« as a central means of self-constitution for numerous right-wing groups and individuals. In her opening speech for the academic year 2017/18 at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Carolin Emcke posed questions about today’s specific necessities for researchers to engage and communicate with the public. She described the current epoch as marked by an anti-intellectualism comprising concerted efforts to undermine trust in all sciences. Too often, she stressed, scholars and writers were portrayed as ideologues with nefarious aims, as elitists working against the people, and as criminal threats to law and order, especially in places like Turkey and Russia, when they stand up for human rights.

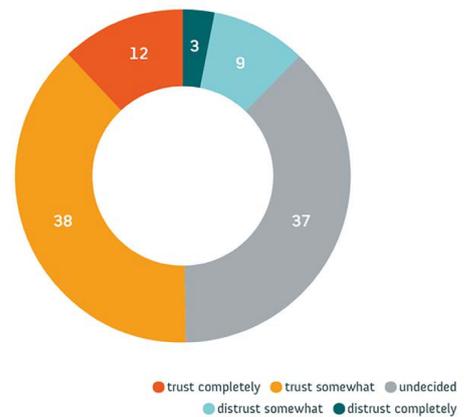
In response to this climate of intimidation and unsubstantiated claims, the initiative Wissenschaft im Dialog added a new question as part of its most recent Science Barometer 2017: »How much do you trust science and research?« Exactly 50 per cent of the respondents completely or somewhat trust science and research, but a large number, 37 per cent, were undecided. What was the main reason why the remaining 11 per cent expressed distrust? Interestingly enough, it was the dependency on funders that caused the most doubts. Thus, it cannot be overemphasised that the freedom to conduct open basic research, as carried out at ZMO, is an important public good.

It is disquieting to see the traditional sources of knowledge production, i.e. the universities and the media, attacked as illegitimate: those who

re-introduce a term like *Lügenpresse* (lying press) from the mid-1800s and install portals to denounce schoolteachers might soon impede academic freedom. Various media over the course of the last year have tried out new formats that privilege direct exchange in order to tone down heated and/or hateful debates. This development can also be observed in academia among colleagues aiming to communicate sound research results to the broader public. But another problem lurks around the corner: too easily, scholars and journalists can fall into the trap of busying themselves day and night with refuting the unsubstantiated claims that pour forth in all areas of information. Dialogue and personal interaction are also a critical aspect of ZMO’s own understanding of knowledge transfer. In an era of filter bubbles and targeted disinformation campaigns, the need for comprehensible

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How much do you trust science and research?



Source: Wissenschaft im Dialog/Kantar Emnid, CC-BY-ND 4.0

Learning Intelligence: The Exchange of Secret Service Knowledge between Germany and the Arab Middle East, 1960-2010 // Sophia Hoffmann

Since July 2017, the ZMO hosts Dr. Sophia Hoffmann as a »Freigeist Fellow« funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. The Freigeist initiative provides post-doctoral scientists from all disciplines with a substantial grant to break new empirical and theoretical ground with challenging new projects. Dr. Hoffmann's project »Learning Intelligence: The Exchange of Secret Service Knowledge between Germany and the Arab Middle East, 1960-2010« investigates the long-standing relations between German and Arab intelligence agencies. The goal of the project is to understand whether these relations included an exchange of knowledge about how to set up and develop intelligence agencies, and thus to contribute to a general theory about the role that intelligence agencies play for modern statehood and international relations. Running for five years, the project will look at both East and West German services' relations with Iraq, Egypt and Yemen. The project will include at least one PhD student, starting in May 2019, and, depending on a further grant proposal, possibly a second PhD student.

The project seeks to explain why most modern states possess intelligence agencies and how knowledge about how to set up and run intelligence agencies spreads internationally. One obvious possibility is that states simply exchange such knowledge, both through direct cooperation and by covertly acquiring information about each other's intelligence methods. By focusing on the two German states and the Arab republics of Yemen, Iraq and Egypt, I investigate if and how such an exchange of knowledge took place between these states in the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century. My primary goal is to develop a general theory about intelligence agencies as highly internationalised actors, whose actions form a global layer of international governance.

This project will run for five years and the second year has just started. After spending the first year reading academic literature about intelligence and deciding on how to approach this large topic in terms of research and analysis, I am now conducting six months of research on the GDR's Ministry of State Security (MfS or Stasi), followed by six months each on the FRG's BND and domestic intelligence agencies (Verfassungsschutz) and on Iraq's, Yemen's and Egypt's intelligence agencies. As I am currently »mining archival gold« in the MfS Archives, readers may forgive me that the empirical examples of this text draw mainly from the MfS and its relations with

the intelligence and security agencies of the Arab world.

Between 1969 and 1971, the MfS received delegations from the Iraqi, the Egyptian and the Sudanese intelligence and security agencies, all requesting the MfS' help to become more effective through the training of officers and improved surveillance technology. The protocol of the Iraqi delegation's 1969 visit is fascinating: beyond detailed discussions about specific aspects of investigative and surveillance work with senior MfS officers, the Iraqi guests toured the entire structure of the MfS apparatus, not only visiting the Berlin headquarters, but also receiving presentations at regional and municipal offices. In a 1970s discussion between the then Sudanese Interior Minister Faruk Hamdallah and the head of the MfS Erich Mielke, the latter himself takes on the educator's role, urging, among other things, the immediate development of a large network of informers in Sudan. Archival documents show that the MfS operated a vast international programme of training foreign intelligence cadres both at home and abroad, sending MfS experts on missions to friendly agencies and providing, for free and against payment, surveillance technology (both GDR- and Western-made).

The security organs of states are commonly understood as highly national institutions that aim to further specific national security interests, often to the detriment of other states. Existing theories of intelligence agencies mir-

ror this concept: agencies are understood to jealously protect their knowledge from the prying eyes of rivals, mobilising sophisticated protection measures to guard their secret knowledge. What my research aims to show is that, in fact, intelligence agencies must also be understood as thoroughly *internationalised*, not just in terms of their investigative reach, but also in terms of the way they perceive themselves, and thus act as, members of an international network, highly aware of each other's work. Intelligence agencies form a layer of international knowledge exchange, which may create internationally homogeneous understandings of threats and how to address them. Let me provide another example.

In the early 1980s, the Soviet intelligence agency provided the Stasi's department for counterterrorism (Terrorabwehr) with information from their Czechoslovak partners. The Czechoslovaks had found out that Syrian intelligence had planted an agent inside a Palestinian group of activists meeting in Prague. This group was planning an assassination campaign against some of its Palestinian rivals across Europe and the Middle East. The Stasi was kindly requested to find out whether any of these targets were resident in the GDR. What does this document reveal about international knowledge exchange between intelligence agencies? Think about it.

Of particular interest to me is also the way knowledge collected from enemy agencies is

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and reproducible research results on Muslim life-worlds is obvious. And how would someone who is not an expert know that we can provide knowledge, when numerous other authors, possibly also with a Ph.D., scrimmage in the same field? Here, confidence in the academic system of peer-reviewed publications and the appointment procedure at universities is essential. By the same token, it is important not only to look at factual distortions, but also to raise awareness for the prescribed and deflecting frames that are used

to shape or situate social concerns. I personally see the latter as an additional element of intervention into the public debate: the dissemination of facts and a critique of the framing of these facts are equally necessary, because they reach different audiences. And we need to reflect on our own discursive styles and possible echo chambers. This is part of safeguarding the trust in us and in what we do at Nikolassee and how we communicate this to the outside world.

Sonja Hegasy

obtained and processed. For example, information that Soviet agencies collected in the 1980s at NATO headquarters about the way NATO intended to handle anti-terrorism activities was translated into German and became part of the Stasi's stock of knowledge. Here we can see that »exchange of knowledge« between intelligence agencies occurs also indirectly, beyond measures such as training or technology provision. Yet grasping the practicalities and meaning

of such indirect forms of knowledge transfer remains a challenge to me. For example, the MfS archives show that a significant number of Arab citizens were MfS informers; some also maintained contact with their national intelligence agencies. How did such persons contribute to an (indirect) exchange of intelligence knowledge? Sometimes, a person emerges as a veritable intelligence »entrepreneur«: providing information to a host of agencies, frequently also working as

an agent for weapons or smuggling goods, passports and people – it appears to me that shining a light on certain biographies could also be a way of explaining aspects of my argument.

Dr. Sophia Hoffmann is a political scientist focused on the international relations of the Middle East. She holds a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies, part of the University of London. Before taking up her current project at the ZMO in 2017, she spent ten years studying migration and humanitarian aid in Syria and its neighbouring states.

Religion, Morality and Boko: Students Training for a Good Life // Abdoulaye Sounaye

In its first year of membership in the Leibniz Association, the ZMO was granted a Junior Research Group in the Leibniz Competition for the project »Religion, Morality and Boko in West Africa: Students Training for a Good Life« (Remoboko). It started in June 2018 and examines the competition between religiosity and secular education at two African universities in Niger and Nigeria. Beyond the competition, rivalry and conflict that emerge between Salafi and Pentecostal groups, this project examines the overarching question of the student as an intellectual, social and sociocultural model. A key goal of the project is to understand how religiosity shapes moral life and affects the mission of the university as a learning and training institution.

At its inception during the colonial rule and even in the post-independence era, in the 1960s, the university in Africa was part of a nation-building project. It was designed mostly for the needs of a public service that was organised around the state institutions. Grounded mostly in secular norms, as its name suggested, it had to be modern, democratic, open and universal, while informing critical minds. Based on this vision, it was supposed to train generations of Africans who were then to ensure the independence, development and



Campus of Ahmadou Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria

progress of their respective countries. As social and intellectual fabric, the university actually reshaped knowledge production across the continent, introduced new cultural forms and opened up the way for new intellectual life and moral references. Most importantly, it has also produced sociocultural models, including an elite that took over and in many cases is still in charge in many countries.

What is left of this vision of the university as a future-making institution in a context in which religiosity has become one of the main markers of campus life and students' life projects? How does religious activism affect the university as a secular and educational institution (*boko*, in Hausa)? How do religion-inspired views and visions interact with science, critical thinking and secular epistemologies? What are the implications of such reconfigurations of the university campus? How do these dynamics cohabit, interact and inform the campus as a social fabric? These questions are at the centre of Remoboko, based at the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient of Berlin, Germany and funded by the German consortium of research institutes, the Leibniz Gemeinschaft. Remoboko is a five-year project (2018-2023) that comes with funding for three PhDs and one postdoctoral fellowship. It seeks to provide insights into Pentecostalism and Salafism on university campuses, as followers of these trends promote moral values, life discipline and norms expected to supplement students' training to achieve a good life.

The project covers Niger and Nigeria, which will provide a basis for comparison in the study of a dynamic that clearly transcends academic traditions. In fact, many of the issues raised here are not exclusive to the two cases the project focuses on. On the contrary, they seem to be

pervasive and are shared across countries and regions in Africa. They raise the question of the challenges that higher education faces in Africa today. As the campus also becomes the platform for Salafi and Pentecostal normative discourses, it is important to investigate how this process affects not only training, but also life trajectories. Furthermore, what do students engaging in religious activism say about their aspirations, especially in a context in which they are portrayed as the leaders of tomorrow? How is this significance of religiosity in the public arena affecting learning cultures and ultimately the social status of the university? Thus, beyond the issues that emerge with Salafi and Pentecostal cohabitation on the campus, this project engages the overarching question of the redefinition of the student as an intellectual and sociocultural model. As the campus, site par excellence for the promotion of secular norms (*boko*), undergoes this change and transformation, a key goal of the project is to understand the re-entanglement, first of religious traditions, and then of the religious and the secular. This will allow us to look at these sources of norms in the same setting and under new light. It will also help us understand how the university becomes an arena of competition for various epistemologies, conceptions of life and visions of the future.



Logo of an Islamic organisation on the campus of Niamey, Niger

Put into a broader context, the problematic of Remoboko echoes preoccupations that have become central to the university in Africa, including those that point to the necessity to reform and de-

colonise such a major institution. Indeed, across the continent and in various contexts, reforming and decolonising the university have become major preoccupations. Are the religionising trends of the university part of this agenda? How can we make sense of these transformation trends? What do they say about the entanglement of values and norms that shape life in Africa today?

Remoboko seeks to contribute to a critical examination of these realities and provide insights into both the knowledge and moral economies that are transforming the university in contemporary Africa.

In: Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 40 (2), 2018, 169-171, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/33n0f3jc>, (slightly changed by the author, November 2018)

activities

■ Conferences & Workshops

Libya between Saharan Routes, Urban Wars, Migration and Local Reconfigurations, 2-3 July 2018, ZMO



In front of ZMO's entrance door (Photo: Bärbel Möllmann)

This workshop, organised by Suaad Al-Ghafal, Adam Benkato and Nora Lafi with the support of the Volkswagen Stiftung and ZMO, was an occasion to critically question and investigate the crisis Libya has been experiencing since the NATO bombings and military intervention of 2011, the current factional chaos and the tragedy of migration, in which thousands of migrants die every year. Combining approaches to international relations, anthropology and history, the aim was to question the relationship between the sphere of the local and more global trends. The workshop featured scholars from both Germany and abroad, with a strong focus on Libyan scholars, whose voices have been largely unheard recently. A specific focus was also put on the urban dimension, from the resurgence of factional territories to the existence of migrant camps. Given Libya's current role in migration and the internal crises it is facing, this workshop was intended as an opportunity to reflect on the roots and consequences of war and on the entanglement of scales

in migration and security. In the panel *Migration in the Longue Durée*, Fadel Lamin (National Economic and Social Development Board, Libya) analysed the new challenges Libya is facing as far as migrants are concerned. What this scholar also showed, paradoxically, is how this new population could positively generate a healthy economy for his homeland with jobs for migrants/refugees and a better life in the future with a real demographic policy with regard to their rights and their status. With her presentation »I am the toy«, Amira Koraiem (ZMO) stressed that many children were killed by the bombings by foreign powers. She also tackled the question of child trafficking and sexual abuse. This situation was explained from a different angle of analysis by Sara Merabti (Sciences Po, Paris). She was one of the few scholars who conducted interviews in Libya with smugglers after the murder of Qadhafi. With her anthropological methods, she explained how the borders of Libya were uncontrolled and how migrants faced human smuggling under the control of militia factions and their foreign proxies. In panel 4 on *Post-Qaddafi Crises*, Nora Lafi (ZMO) illustrated the many entanglements between local factions and geopolitical instrumentalizations in post-2011 in Libya. Mohamedou

Meyine from the University of Nouakchott in Mauritania showed how this situation destabilised the whole region from Mali to Mauritania. Dauda Abubakar from the University of Jos in Nigeria explained how Nigerian migrants in the post-2011 period were exposed to dangerous and chaotic routes through Libya and the negative impact in West Africa. The last panel, entitled *The Ambiguous Governance of Migration in Times of War*, comprised papers by Suaad Al-Ghafal, a Libyan historian from ZMO, and Salah Younes Zater, a Libyan independent journalist in Hamburg. Al-Ghafal presented her research based on statistics and the number of migrants. She focused on »illegal« migration, as it is mainly seen in Europe but not necessarily in Libya and Africa in general. Libya used to host a huge number of non-Libyan people coming from the whole continent for work, and the former regime managed to use them with profit. Younes Zater, a rare eyewitness to the situation in Libya at the time of war, showed in an academic way his photos and his documentaries on the horror of this war: mass graves, places of torture. He exposed as well the horrible situation of the Libyans called the Tawergha. These people faced atrocities between the struggle for survival and their claim to a right to be in their own country. All these papers are now being edited for publication.

Suaad Al-Ghafal, Nora Lafi

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The Land Question in North Africa in an Era of Global Resource Grabs and Ecological Crisis: Trajectories of Appropriation, Dynamics of Agrarian Change and Rural Resilience Strategies, 25-26 September 2018, ZMO



Intensive discussions during the sessions and beyond



This conference brought together some thirty researchers representing several disciplines (sociology, geography, political science, anthropology) and coming from institutions in several regions (North Africa, Western Europe, North America). Presentations and discussions of contributions were mainly in French and English, but often in Arabic as well.

It was organised by Joseph Désiré Som-I (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, CEPED-Paris Descartes University), Mathilde Fautras (Villers-lès-Nancy University), Mohammed Benidir (National School of Architecture of Tetouan) and Giulio Iocco (DISPeS and CeSSR, University of Calabria). It benefited from the scientific, logistical and financial support of the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient and several other institutions and partners.

The two days offered an occasion to seek to combine various approaches, original and innovative, in order to gain a clearer and deeper understanding of the processes of appropriation of control over land and natural resources in North Africa. The aim was to identify the related dynamics of agrarian and rural change, as well as rural resistance and the social and political protests that these processes generate. From a multidisciplinary and comparative perspective, the conference tried to produce a complementary analysis that highlights the specificity of local contexts, the role of historicity and temporalities and the way these modulate the forms of ownership and resistance around resources. The conference was an opportunity to stimulate the dialogue between critical and global approaches that are very present in the Anglophone literature and approaches that focus on the actors and micro-sociological dimensions more present in the French literature. The work was organised around three major sessions. The first session focused on the historical depth of land grabbing in North Africa. It showed that from the nineteenth century onwards, from Algeria to Libya, the processes of land grabbing involve both states, but also international firms, thus entering into processes of economic globalisation

that overlap and intermingle with relationships of domination. The second session, devoted to the contemporary dynamics of land grabbing and agrarian and environmental change, was spread over the afternoon of the first day and the entire morning of the second. We can note here that this session permitted us to highlight new forms of land grabbing in North Africa that are made by local small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs on the one hand, but also »green grabbing«, which is a new phenomenon that is part of the process of commodification of forests as sources of rent. Finally, the third session focused on the variety and modularity of forms of resistance to these grabbing processes. We can mention here the works that made it possible to restore the role of these rural resistances in what is known as the »Arab Spring«. The results of this work will be published in accordance with the wishes of the participants and the support of the ZMO.

Joseph Désiré Som-I

»Islam« as an Epistemic Field: Imperial Entanglements and Orientalism in the German-Speaking World since 1870, 11-12 October 2018, ZMO

This conference, organised by Nils Riecken (ZMO, research area »Trajectories of Lives and Knowledge«) and Larissa Schmid (Freie Universität Berlin/Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin), was designed to intervene in current debates about »Islam« from a historical perspective and ask how a postcolonial history of knowledge might contribute to such an endeavour. The conference thus posed the overarching question how current discourses about »Islam« as a major political »problem« for German politics are related to the historical constitution of »Islam« as an

epistemic field and as a political object of debate and intervention in the German-speaking world. To this end, the conference brought together junior and senior scholars from History, Islamic Studies and Religious Studies. While engaging in such a mode of historicising the knowledge production about »Islam«, the topics of the individual papers of the conference ranged from the late nineteenth century through the twentieth century up to the present. All papers revealed the central importance of the trans-regional dimension for understanding the constitution of »Islam.«

Two papers directly took on present-day concerns. Ruth Mas addressed the question how sovereignty is produced through the racist exclusion of the figure of the Muslim refugee, and Bettina Gräf examined the question how the current drone wars in Yemen constitute a topic that is difficult to engage from within German *Islamwissenschaft*. The papers by Jörg Hauastein and Zubair Ahmad focused on the question how »Islam« as an object of political debate and intervention was produced in and through German colonies and colonial policies in East Africa. Several papers addressed scholarly networks and discourses at different sites in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. For instance, Philipp Bruckmayr analysed how the writings of the Catholic priest, scholar and Professor of Biblical Studies Hermann Stieglecker differed from those of his mostly Protestant colleagues at secular universities. Another group of papers addressed the Federal Republic of Germany; for instance, Iskander Ahmed Abdallah looked at the temporal underpinnings of calls for a »liberal Islam.«

In her concluding comment, Rebekka Habermas, a specialist in colonial history and the history of knowledge, deemed the conference successful in specifying critical aspects in the emergence of »Islam as an epistemic field« and what constitutes *Islamwissenschaft* in the German-speaking world. In the second concluding comment, Schirin Amir-Moazami, a specialist in critical secular studies, emphasised the importance of engaging methodological concerns and the concept of the imperial in this context.

Nils Riecken

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

Our conference marks the completion of ZMO's twelve-year research programme *Muslim Worlds – World of Islam? Conceptions, Practices, and Crises of the Global*. Conducted over three days in April 2019, the conference consists of eight panels, a keynote lecture by Professor Seema Alavi, and a roundtable discussion, titled »Was sind muslimische Welten? Fragen an den globalen Norden«, moderated by ZMO's Director Professor Ulrike Freitag.

Panelists at the conference present their perspectives on the study of predominantly Muslim societies of Asia and Africa, as well as regional interconnections. Scholars specifically address the notion of »Claiming and Making Muslim Worlds«, exploring religious affiliations and practices, extending to social, economic and cultural modalities of life. From a variety of disciplines, panelists discuss pluralities of actors, institutions, locations and world making – for Muslim subjects and non-Muslims alike.

Our plural notion of *worlds* encompasses local and global, or *translocal*, intersections. *Worlds* refers to varying traditions, institu-

tions, and media, by which people go about shaping their sense of self and place, claim their connections and affiliations, religious and otherwise. Place and environment are increasingly mediated by varying technological applications, symbolic transactions, social imaginaries, and differentiated circulations of resources. In addition, they are crisscrossed by movements of migration. While there are hardly any localities not impacted by globalising interactions, by the same token, the global is unthinkable without a sense of the local

The conference reflects ZMO's ongoing interdisciplinary research interest in translocal and globalising processes from the perspective of the »Global South«. It therefore goes against the grain of predominating conceptual, historical, and geographical research repertoires that assume the centrality of the global north. Such repertoires have tended to portray Islam and the Muslim world as singular and homogeneous. Accordingly, panel presentations strive to complicate any neat compartmentalising of historiographical and geographical categories.

In her Keynote, »Muslim Cosmopolitanism and the Writing of World History«, Seema Alavi adds a historical perspective on how Muslim scholars and thinkers contributed to projects of modernity. Focusing on a Muslim scholar from colonial India, Imdadullah Makki (1817-99), she discusses the imperial rivalries through which he established his own institution and discourse of Muslim cosmopolitanism.

The roundtable, »What Are Muslim Worlds? Talking Back to the Global North«, takes place in the late afternoon of the second day, and is conducted in German. Participants discuss how scholarship on and in Muslim worlds relate to public debates in Europe about Muslims and Islam, and further address possible links between their research frameworks and the social forces shaping scholarly orientations, such as media reports and discussions in political and social forums. For the programme please have a look at http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/2019/Conferences/ConferenceProgramme_ClaimingAndMakingMuslimWorlds_Final.pdf.

Dietrich Reetz, Saadi Nikro

■ Other Activities

ZMO Visit to Kazan, 15-18 May 2018

In May a 5-person ZMO delegation (Sonja Hegasy, Stefan Kirmse, Jeanine Dağyeli, Kyara Klausmann and Florian Copperrath) visited Kazan Federal University (KFU), Russia's second-oldest university, in the Autonomous Republic of Tatarstan. Founded as Kazan Imperial University in 1804, this institution was the cradle of »Oriental Studies« in the Russian Empire. The Republic of Tatarstan, approx. 600 km east of Moscow on the Volga River, is one of the Russian Federation's predominantly Muslim regions. The ZMO delegation had been invited by the KFU's Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies to strengthen ties between the two institutions. In addition to signing a memorandum of understanding, the ZMO delegation held a series of meetings with Kazan University professors and students, imams and representatives of the Tatar Academy of Sciences. Our hosts also organised visits to the Märçani Mosque (built in 1766-1770, in Kazan's Tatar quarter), tours of the Tatar quarter and the Kazan Kremlin with



Astronomical Observatory of Kazan Federal University (completed in 1837)

its new mosque and Russian Orthodox cathedral and a trip to Bolgar, the former capital of the medieval Volga Bulgarian state, which adopted Islam in 922. At this location, the Russian Federation recently sponsored the construction and opening of the Bolgar Islamic Academy (<http://bia.tatar/>), which now trains imams under the auspices of the Russian muftiate and the Russian Ministry of Science and Education. We were given an extended tour of the institution by one of the teachers. On the final day, our delegation took the po-

dium at the »Show Room« talk show in Kazan (broadcast on Tatar state television), discussing ZMO's research interest in Muslims with a substantial student audience. ZMO and KFU's Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies is planning to develop joint funding bids over the next year, either as a DFG cooperation grant or a Leibniz »co-operative excellence« grant. The KFU may also be associated with the Leibniz WissenschaftsCampus as an external partner.

Stefan Kirmse

Syria, the World and Populism. The Future in the Middle East – a Berlin Debate

So it's possible after all. It's possible, on an autumn evening in this politically stirred up year 2018, to debate in front of a large audience in Berlin's Mitte district about the future of the Middle East, Islam, Christianity, and the streams of refugees in the world – without everything getting loud, abusive, or even merely populist. Maybe the venue contributed to this: the hall of the Catholic Academy on Hannoverische Straße, which the management of the Academy made available for a joint event with the Berlin Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient and the »Humboldt-Viadrina Governance Plattform«. It sounds academic, but it wasn't. It wasn't, already because people sat up front on the long podium who have travelled in North Africa and the Middle East between Tunis and Teheran for many years, who come from Syria, or who know that something like an Islamic State, the IS, never existed as a state.

So it's possible after all that people who have seen the world encounter people who still want to know something about the world – who have questions. Questions for Kristin Helberg, one of Germany's best experts on Syria, questions for Aktham Suliman, who has been a correspondent for Al Jazeera in Germany for many years, questions for the orientalist Daniel Gerlach, for Anne-Beatrice Clasmann, for many years the dpa's Cairo correspondent, and for the political consultant Adnan Tabatabai, who knows what an election campaign in Teheran means. And for the Islamic Studies scholar Udo Steinbach; he and Sonja Hegasy from the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient had invited the discussants to this Berlin podium.

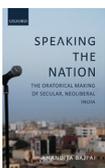
»Assad has won.«

The evaluations that the experts provided were rather encouraging about the situation in Tunisia, where the Arab Spring began (Clasmann). They were clearly worried with an eye to Iran (Tabatabai);

they were demanding, when it came to the legacy of IS: »What do we do now with the people who suffered under the IS?« (Gerlach) – and they were worldly wise about the error of wanting to regard Western European democracy as a model for everything (Suliman). Finally, this evening was sobering for everyone who wanted to know what the future will be in Syria: »Assad has won this war militarily; he will remain in power,« says Kristin Helberg. And she says that, in her opinion, we are in the midst of a »Syriazation« of the world. A clear hypothesis, and it goes: because we didn't protect the people in Syria, they have fled to Europe, and with everything that follows from that, populism is burgeoning and now threatens Europe itself. A high price for failing to provide assistance. And material for many more debates.

Jochen Arntz, *Berliner Zeitung*, 11 October 2018 (by courtesy released for translation)

publications



- Bajpai, Anandita: *Speaking the Nation. The Oratorical Making of Secular Neoliberal India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018.



- Lafi, Nora: *Esprit civique et organisation citadine dans l'Empire ottoman (XVe-XXe siècles)*. (The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage, 64) Leiden: Brill, 2018.



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

People

In August, Prof. Kai Kresse joined ZMO from Columbia University in New York, where he was Associate Professor for African and Swahili Studies in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies (MESAAS) for over five years. He has taken on a joint appointment as Vice Director for Research at ZMO and University Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Freie Universität Berlin, where he is also a PI for the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies (BGSMS). Trained in Anthropology, Philosophy and African Studies, with a PhD from SOAS, his fields of research and expertise include Culture and Society on the Swahili Coast, Islam in Africa, Anthropology of Religion, East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean, African Philosophy and Intercultural Philosophy.

The Junior Research Group Remoboko (see Profiles) currently includes three PhD students, Adejoke Rafiat Adetoro (University of Ibadan, Nigeria), Bello Adamou Mahamadou (Université Abdou Moumouni of Niamey, Niger) and Vincent Favier (ZMO), in addition to the group leader Dr. Abdoulaye Sounaye. A postdoctoral researcher will join the group in 2020. Adejoke Rafiat Adetoro holds a master's degree in History from the University of Ibadan and a bachelor in History from the University of Ilorin. She's currently pursuing a PhD in History at the University of Ibadan with a research focus on the effects of religiosity, Salafism and Pentecostalism on the educational practices and social life of university students. In particular, she intends to provide insight into the intersection of campus religiosity and knowledge production and reception at the University of Ibadan. Her research interests also include Gender and Sexuality Studies and religious institutions and inter-faith relations. Bello Adamou Mahamadou studied sociology and anthropology and finished a master's degree on refugees and youth integration in the Boko Haram terrorist groups. In Remoboko, he works on religious dynamics at Abdou Moumouni University and the interaction between the religions and the university environment, which is supposed to be secular. Vincent Favier completed a master's degree at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in 2016, focusing on music and society among the Gogo people of Tanzania. In July 2018, he started a PhD at ZMO, concentrating on students' religiosity on the university campuses of Niamey, Niger and Ibadan, Nigeria. His research interests focus on anthropology of religion and visual anthropology.

Dr. Malte Fuhrmann, a ZMO fellow from 2006 to 2008, returned to ZMO in September 2018. He holds a degree in History and Balkan Studies and completed his PhD at the Freie Universität Berlin on German cultural colonialism in the Ottoman Empire. For his present project, he has received a grant from the German Research Foundation (DFG) to investigate »Developmentality in Southeastern Europe: The Evolution of Developmental Discourse in Bulgaria and Turkey in the Debate on Traffic Infrastructure (1908-1989)«. The project aims at a better understanding of how hopes and fears projected onto development projects have influenced power dynamics in Southeastern Europe in the twentieth century.

Dr. Khaled Adham has been working at the ZMO for six months as of October 2018. He is an architect and urban planner with a research focus on contemporary urban developments in Cairo, Egypt. His project at ZMO concentrates on investigating intergenerational inequalities in the production of houses and the current urbanisation process in Cairo.

Dr. Izabela Orłowska was granted a one-year Independent Scholar Fellowship of the Independent Social Research Foundation (London) for the project »Ethnicity, Conflict and Festivalisation of Politics in Ethiopia« during 2019.

Alisher Karabaev, former student assistant for three years at ZMO, started in October a position in the library of ZMO. He holds a B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of Leipzig and an M.A. degree in Central Asian Studies with a focus on Afghanistan from Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. His work at ZMO library focuses on the digitisation of archival material.

Dr. Farhan Karim (University of Kansas) is Volkswagen/Andrew Mellon fellow from December 2018 to August 2019 and working on the project »Dreaming of a Nation: Muslim Nationalism, Architecture and Cold War Modernisation of Postcolonial Pakistan«. Some are coming, others are leaving. We are bidding farewell to several dear colleagues. After 33 years of constant and dedicated activity for the ZMO, our warden Petra Engler is leaving for a well-deserved retirement. A deep and cordial good-bye and thank you from all! Dr. Nazan Maksudyan has been offered an Einstein Guest Professorship at the Freie Universität Berlin, in addition to a 3-year research position at the Centre Marc Bloch (CMB). She started at the CMB in October 2018, will take up the Einstein Professorship for a year in January 2019 and returns to the CMB in 2020. Regina Sarreiter, a

long-standing colleague and PhD student since 2015 in the research area »Trajectories«, is heading for new shores as a research fellow at the Lindenmuseum in Stuttgart as of January 2019. Also Dr. Jeanine Dağyeli, a research fellow in the research area »Resources« is leaving ZMO to begin work as an Assistant Professor at Nazarbayev University in Astana, Kazakhstan as of January 2019. And also our colleague Yasser Mehanna, Public Relations Assistant to the Director, will meet a new challenge. He leaves ZMO at the end of the year to start in the public relations office of the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg. Dr. Sarah Jurkiewicz returned from maternity leave in October 2018, and Jan Brauburger, her representative during that time, left for a one-year trainee programme to become a Trade Union Secretary of IG Metall in Frankfurt. Dr. Stefan Tetzlaff was based at ZMO between November 2017 and August 2018 as a researcher in the DFG-sponsored project »Modern India in German Archives«. He has taken up a fellowship at the GHI in Washington. Dr. Muhammad Ali Raza, research fellow since 2012 left ZMO at the end of August for a position as Assistant Professor at Lahore University of Management Sciences.

For 2019, the ZMO will host seven visiting Research Fellows. For the first half-year, we expect Diliara Brileva, The Academy of Sciences of Tartarstan (January); Stephen Ogundipe, Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Nigeria (April); Zilola Khalilova, Institute of History, Academy of Sciences Uzbekistan (April-May); and Pankaj Kumar Jha, University of Delhi (June).

Events

On 18-19 September 2018, Section A: Humanities and Educational Research of the Leibniz Association met for the first time at ZMO. This provided an opportunity for the directors of the other institutes of the section to get to know the place and the work of the Centre, as well as to meet some of the colleagues.

Award

ZMO Director Prof. Ulrike Freitag was awarded the DRS Award for Excellent Supervision 2018 by the Dahlem Research School in appreciation of her outstanding engagement in the supervision and mentoring of doctoral students. The annual honouring rewards two supervisors from the Freie Universität for the exceptional quality of their work. The award sum is 2,000 Euros, which are earmarked for the specific purpose of further supporting junior researchers. Congratulations!