



# MIDDLE EAST RESEARCH CONVENTION 2015

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STUDIES

Dear associates, students, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the first ACMES research convention. You can look forward to a whole day of papers offering the latest insights into research that is just about to begin or recently finished. Over forty scholars from the University of Amsterdam and elsewhere are eager to engage in discussions about their research and to share it with a wider public. For the 72 ACMES associates, today is about getting to know each other better and about acquainting ourselves with each other's work. If you are a student or a guest, this day is what you make of it. Maybe you are interested in a specific paper presentation or maybe you want to get a general idea of where Middle Eastern studies stands at the University of Amsterdam. Whatever brings you here, we just hope it informs, enlightens and stimulates.

To stay informed of future ACMES events, keep track of our website [acmes.uva.nl](http://acmes.uva.nl), request to be added to the mailing list at [acmes@uva.nl](mailto:acmes@uva.nl), or like the Facebook page *Amsterdam Midden-Oosten Studies*.

On behalf of the Steering Committee, I thank all presenting participants, the moderators of the various panels, the ACMES interns Eline van Veen and Leroy Niekoop (both MA Middle Eastern Studies) and Studievereniging Asafier. Without your participation this convention could not have happened.

**Dr. Robbert Woltering**  
Director ACMES

The following associates are members of the Steering Committee: Drs. Paul Aarts; Josephine van den Bent MA; Dr. Maaïke Van Berkel; Prof. dr. Annelies Moors; Prof. dr. Gerard Wiegers; Dr. Robbert Woltering; Dr. Liesbeth Zack.

## Programme

<b>Reception with tea/coffee 09:00</b>			Doelenzaal
<b>Welcoming address 09:30</b>			Doelenzaal
<b>Morning sessions 9:45-11:30</b>			
Panel	Papers	Moderator	Location
<b>IRAN TODAY</b>	<p><b>Jafari</b> – <i>More than Rent: Oil, Labor and the Making of Modern Iran.</i></p> <p><b>Michaelsen</b> – <i>Domesticating the Web: The politics of internet control in Iran.</i></p> <p><b>Matin</b> – <i>Demystifying Iran: The International Dimension of Social Change.</i></p>	Aarts	Vondelzaal
<b>THE MANIFOLD FATE OF THE NOTION OF PREDESTINATION: UNDERSTANDINGS AND USES OF PREDESTINATION IN ISLAM</b>	<p><b>Kateman</b> – <i>History contested. Discussing the issue of predestination in colonial times.</i></p> <p><b>Van den Bent</b> – <i>Baybars, saviour of Muslims. Ibn al-Nafīs' predestined course of history in Al-Risāla al-Kāmiliyya.</i></p> <p><b>Colominas</b> – <i>Predestination and free will in Mudejar polemics. Kitāb al-Mujādala ma'a-l-Yahūd wa-l-Naṣārā [The book called disputation with the Jews and the Christians] and its historical and intellectual background.</i></p>	van Berkel	Potgieter Zaal
<b>SPACE AND THE CITY: THE POLITICS OF THE FAÇADE IN MIDDLE EASTERN CITIES</b>	<p><b>Naeff</b> – <i>Surface City: Billboards, Facades and Urban Identity in Beirut.</i></p> <p><b>Dibazar</b> – <i>The invisible city: Capturing the street in Teheran.</i></p> <p><b>Maessen</b> – <i>Beyoglu's streetlife and the spatial turn: Why does space matter in historical analysis?</i></p>	Ansari	Belle van Zuylenzaal
<b>CITIZENS AND RIGHTS</b>	<p><b>Voorhoeve</b> – <i>The first constitution of the Arab world: The Qanun al-Dawla between fact and fiction.</i></p> <p><b>Meijer</b> – <i>Citizenship, citizen rights and the Arab Uprisings.</i></p> <p><b>Boekelo</b> – <i>'Getting into names': the order of discourse and the imagination of citizenship in two Beirut public spaces.</i></p>	Peters	Doelenzaal
<b>Coffee Break 11:30-11:45</b>			

<b>PLENARY LECTURE 11:45 – 12:30</b>			
<b>Dr. Michiel Leezenberg</b> <i>Iraq, ISIS and the Kurds:</i> <i>Redrawing National, Religious and Sexual Boundaries</i>			Doelen zaal
<b>Lunch break 12:30 – 14:00</b>			
<b>Early afternoon sessions 14:00 – 16:00</b>			
<b>MARRIAGE CONTROVERSIES: PUBLIC DEBATES AND LIVED EXPERIENCE</b>	<p><b>Moors</b> – <i>Islamic Marriages in the Netherlands: Beyond the Radicalisation Frame.</i></p> <p><b>Vroon-Najem</b> – <i>Conversion to Islam: What does marriage have to do with it?</i></p> <p><b>Sadegh</b> – <i>Marriage Law, Marriage Stories: Muslims in Malta.</i></p> <p><b>Fioole</b> – <i>From Parenting to Marriage: Dealing with transgressions in Morocco?</i></p> <p><b>Bavelaar</b> – <i>Framing Mixed Marriages in Egypt.</i></p> <p><b>Zbeidy</b> – <i>Marriage Controversies in Beirut: A Preliminary Note on Categorization.</i></p>	McBrien & Moors	Belle van Zuylen zaal
<b>COLLECTING ISLAM IN EUROPE</b>	<p><b>Mols</b> – <i>Collecting the Arabian Peninsula: Late nineteenth and early twentieth century Dutch envoys and academics.</i></p> <p><b>Hoijtink</b> – <i>Islam as an Issue. Dilemmas in nineteenth century Museums of Antiquity.</i></p> <p><b>Gallini</b> – <i>Italian Orientalism and Collecting Practices. Two enameled silver plaques from a private collection.</i></p> <p><b>Van Puyvelde</b> – <i>The collection 'Art from the Islamic World' in the Royal Museums of Art &amp; History in Brussels: its history and presentation.</i></p> <p><b>Shatanawi</b> – <i>Indonesia and Islamic art: the historiography of a neglected heritage.</i></p>	Van Berkel	Vondel zaal
<b>CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ISRAEL/ PALESTINE</b>	<p><b>Volinz</b> – <i>Securing the ethnocratic city: Public-private security assemblages in Jerusalem.</i></p> <p><b>Roei</b> – <i>Militarism and Israeli Art.</i></p> <p><b>De Jong</b> – <i>Peace versus Justice: Normalization, Co-resistance, BDS and other questions of power in Palestine.</i></p> <p><b>Stelder</b> – <i>Working Through Silence.</i></p> <p><b>Dekker</b> – <i>Security from below: critical approaches to research in the Palestinian territories.</i></p>	De Jong	Doelen zaal

**Coffee Break 16:00 – 16:15**

**Late afternoon sessions 16:15 – 18:00**

<p><b>HISTORICAL SOURCES IN DIALECTOLOGY: READING PRE-MODERN LINGUISTICS OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE</b></p>	<p><b>Zack</b> – <i>The reliability of older linguistic documents: establishing the quality of sources on nineteenth century Cairo Arabic.</i></p> <p><b>Zwartjes</b> – <i>How to translate Western linguistic concepts into Arabic? Some remarks on Pedro de Alcalá's Vocabulista arauiga en letra castellana (1505).</i></p> <p><b>Al-Jallad</b> – <i>Tracing the history of the Arabic definite articles: a new perspective from Old (pre-Islamic) Arabic.</i></p>	<p>Dorleijn</p>	<p>Vondel zaal</p>
<p><b>NEGOTIATING THE PAST: THE DYNAMICS OF HERITAGE AND MEMORY IN TURKEY, PALESTINE/ ISRAEL</b></p>	<p><b>De Cesari</b> – <i>Restoring the Past, Claiming Rights in the Present: Uses of Heritage in Old Hebron.</i></p> <p><b>Saloul</b> – <i>Competing Memories: Fragile Pasts in an Ongoing Present.</i></p> <p><b>D'Amora</b> – <i>Rebranding the Empire: Contrasting Performances of the Ottoman Past.</i></p> <p><b>Sariaslan</b> – <i>A Strategic Modernity on the Shores of the Bosphorus: Istanbul Museum of Modern Art.</i></p>	<p>Boast</p>	<p>Belle van Zuylen zaal</p>
<p><b>IMAGES OF THE OTHER: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF PREJUDICE AND STEREOTYPE</b></p>	<p><b>Van Heelsum</b> – <i>Coping with anti-Muslim sentiments, how representatives of organizations handle prejudice.</i></p> <p><b>Stremmelaar</b> – <i>A history of Muslim anti-Semitism in the Netherlands.</i></p> <p><b>Breure</b> – <i>Images of the Yazidi: unknown, unloved. Social and political processes from text construction to physical events.</i></p>	<p>Woltering</p>	<p>Potgieter zaal</p>
<p><b>SMALLER POLITICS: STRUGGLE AND CONTENTION BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE REGIONAL STATE</b></p>	<p><b>Azoulay &amp; Beaugrand</b> – <i>Kuwait: When regional turmoil exasperates domestic political struggle.</i></p> <p><b>Matthies-Boon</b> – <i>Mental Health and Revolution: Trauma Amongst Egyptian Activists.</i></p> <p><b>Dalmasso &amp; Clark</b> – <i>The transitional momentum in Tunisia from a local politics perspective.</i></p>	<p>Aarts</p>	<p>Doelen zaal</p>

**Drinks**

### Morning sessions 9:45-11:30

#### **1.1 Iran Today**

This panel discusses topics concerning contemporary issues in Iran. First, Peyman Jafari will discuss the impact of oil on political developments in Iran. Then Marcus Michaelsen will elaborate on internet censorship, which is being used to respond to forms of usage challenging the regime in the political and/or socio-cultural spheres of Iran. The final paper, presented by Kamran Matin, poses questions about Iran's distinct experience of modernity and revolution to pinpoint the root cause of classical social theory's eurocentrism and to suggest an alternative non-eurocentric social theory.

Moderator: Paul Aarts (UvA, Political Economy and Transnational Governance)

**Peyman Jafari** (UvA, Faculty of Law, PPLE)

*More than Rent: Oil, Labor and the Making of Modern Iran.*

For quite a long time, researchers have treated oil production in the Middle East essentially as a source of nontax state revenue, arguing it has functioned as an impediment to democratic and economic development. More recently, a number of empirical studies have challenged or modified this 'resource curse', while maintaining the perception of oil as revenue. Others, most notably Timothy Mitchell (*Carbon Democracy*), have avoided seeing the oil industry as a black box that pours out revenue for the state. Instead, they have explored the impact of oil on political developments through the historical study of the social and technical processes involved in the production of oil. This paper contributes to the debate on the role of oil in the Middle East by posing the following question: in which ways and why has oil production shaped the political history of modern Iran? While providing a historical overview, the focus lies on the period of the Iranian Revolution (1978-1982).

Theoretically, this paper builds on the insight that the impact of oil is contingent on other factors but argues that these should not be reduced to institutions. In agreement with Mitchell, the paper approaches the oil industry through the lens of production process, and stresses the importance of labor. However, the paper challenges Mitchell's deterministic generalization that the production process of the oil industry made it less vulnerable to mass mobilization.

**Dr. Marcus Michaelsen** (UvA, Transnational Configurations, Conflict and Governance)

*Domesticating the Web: The Politics of Internet Control in Iran*

Authoritarian states have come up with a broad set of strategies to control the internet and its various applications while also benefitting from the technology's potential. Iran represents an important case study for investigating this 'networked authoritarianism'. In the last decade, the Iranian state has developed a sophisticated system of internet censorship in order to respond to forms of usage challenging the regime in the political and/or socio-cultural spheres. At the same time, state actors actively use the internet for maintaining their hold on power, be it to shape public discourse ('authoritarian deliberation') or simply for purposes of surveillance and repression. This presentation will give a short overview of the principal patterns in Iran's internet administration and then focus on the international and transnational dimensions of these policies. Here, it is particularly interesting to examine Iran's cooperation with other authoritarian states on internet control (exchange of knowledge and technology) as well as regarding policy making in the field of global internet governance. In conclusion, the presentation will seek to open up a discussion on how internet policies may contribute to authoritarian stabilization and diffusion.

**Dr. Kamran Matin** (University of Sussex, International Relations, School of Global Studies)

*Demystifying Iran: The International Dimension of Social Change*

Iranian modernity has thrown Eurocentric limitations of classical social theory into the sharpest relief. This has led to the dominance of micro-theoretical or narrative accounts of Iranian modernity that elide the need for a radical reconstruction of classical social theory away from its Eurocentric foundations. This intellectual posture's porosity to essentialism and exceptionalism converges with the anti-universalism of post-structuralist and post-colonial approaches. Against this backdrop, this paper seeks to deploy Iran's distinct experience of modernity and revolution to pinpoint the root cause of classical social theory's eurocentrism, and sketch an alternative non-Eurocentric social theory that comprehends historical difference as a universal feature of, and organic to, social development. Through a critical interrogation of Weberian and Marxian historical sociology the paper traces classical social theory's Eurocentrism to its ontologically singular conception of society, which furnishes sheerly 'internalist' conceptions of social change. This paper

therefore argues for a social theory that is based on a plural social ontology that assigns a constitutive and generative theoretical status to international relations understood as the interactive co-existence of all historical forms of social coherence in mutually recognized integrities. The argument culminates in a novel conception of social change in which societies' interactive co-existence enters into their individual existence and vice-versa. Consequently, variation in the experience and outcomes of modernity are recast as an organic property of the international dimension of social change itself. These theoretical arguments are outlined and substantiated through empirical investigation of the revolutionary conjuncture of the post-1953 coup in Iran exploding the 1979 revolution.

### **1.2 The Manifold fate of the notion of predestination: understandings and uses of predestination in Islam**

The notion of predestination has been a recurring theme among Muslims, playing amongst others an important role in their contacts with members of other ethnic and religious groups. This panel pays attention to the resilient continuity of this concept throughout history by exploring the debates on the meanings and functions of predestination in particular contexts bound by time and place. Three different papers will focus on key examples of how predestination was conceptualised and politically mobilised in the Medieval Iberian Peninsula and Mamluk and Modern Egypt. The three historical cases, using specific theoretical frameworks and sources in each presentation, will serve to illustrate how views on predestination were endorsed, contested, and employed by Muslims across the Islamic world. These different approaches to predestination in various regional and historical contexts will be used to compare theories and perspectives, in order to gain understanding of the meaning of the differences as well as the similarities between the three cases analysed and to inquire into the relevance of each other's insights and analyses. In combining forces, this panel hopes to shed light on the manifold fate of the notion of predestination in Muslim societies.

Moderator: Dr. Maaike van Berkel (UvA, History)

**Mònica Colominas Aparicio** (UvA, Religious Studies)

*Predestination and free will in Mudejar polemics. Kitāb al-Mujādala ma'a-l-Yahūd wa-l-Naṣārā [The book called disputation with the Jews and the Christians] and its historical and intellectual background.*

A case in point are the controversies of the Muslim minority communities living under Christian rule in the Medieval Iberian Peninsula, commonly known as Mudejars, with the Christians and the Jews, and with their Muslim coreligionists. The analysis of the fifteenth-century polemic entitled *Kitāb al-Mujādala ma‘a -l-yahūd wa-l-naṣārā* [The Book Called Disputation with the Jews and the Christians] shows that the Mudejars' approaches to predestination were not exceptional but seem to be connected with that of contemporary Christians and Jews. Moreover, the author's worldview is indebted to the legacy of Almohad thought among Muslims living in the Iberian Peninsula.

**Ammeke Kateman** (UvA, Religious Studies)

*History contested. Discussing the issue of predestination in colonial times.*

Jumping to the year 1900, the issue of predestination in Islam made it to the front pages of the main Arabic newspapers of colonized Egypt, triggered by an article on Islam by the former French minister of Foreign Affairs Gabriel Hanotaux (1853-1944) and the reply to it by the Egyptian Islamic reformer Muḥammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905). This paper investigates Hanotaux and ‘Abduh's clashing interpretations of predestination in Islam. ‘Abduh vehemently contested Hanotaux's argument that the way predestination was conceptualised in Islam was crippling for Muslims and that it led to lethargy and fatalism. This paper will relate this heated discussion to their shared, and perhaps typically modern, understanding of history and time, to understand how the concept of predestination in Islam was understood, used and heavily contested in the age of colonialism.

**Josephine Van den Bent** (UvA, History)

*Baybars, saviour of Muslims. Ibn al-Nafīs' predestined course of history in Al-Risāla al-Kāmiliyya.*

Predestination was, however, not just subject to intellectual and religious debates; it could also be employed as a ruler's legitimisation strategy. Ibn al-Nafīs was a thirteenth-century physician and author based in Cairo. He authored a great many medical treatises, but his treatise *Al-Risāla al-Kāmiliyya fī al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya* [The Treatise of Kāmil on the Biography of the Prophet] is a very different type of work. Building on the story of Kāmil, who has spontaneously come to life on an uninhabited island, and his discovery through reason of philosophical, theological, and natural truths, he

employs a description of a predestined course of history in an obvious attempt to legitimise Mamluk rule.

### **1.3 Space and the City: the politics of the façade in Middle Eastern cities**

This panel investigates the significance of urban identity as experienced in three contemporary cities in the Middle East. These cities being Beirut, Tehran and the district of Beyoğlu in Istanbul. First, the use and importance of space in investigating urban identity and neighbourhood identity will be discussed by Enno Maessen. Then, Judith Naeff and Pedram Dibazar will investigate diverse implications of the urban façade. The notion of the façade tackles issues such as superficiality and authenticity, visibility and invisibility, and surface and depth.

Moderator: Uzma Ansari (UvA, ASCA)

**Enno Maessen** (UvA, ARTES)

*Beyoğlu's streetlife and the spatial turn: Why does space matter in historical analysis?*

For the last forty years significant shifts have resulted in the reconfiguration of the relationship between history and geography. Prior to the 1980s, space was often considered as the mere backdrop for historical events, an empty container in which the forces of social, economic and political structures functioned. Especially the publication of David Harvey's *Consciousness and the Urban Experience* in 1985 and the translation of Henri Lefebvre's *La production de l'espace* into English in 1991 had a strong impact on urban historiography and resulted into what has been coined by some as 'the spatial turn'. At present the role of space has become an undeniably important factor of analysis in urban history.

Why is it that space matters to historians? As urban historian Leif Jerram points out, the first thing a conscious person is aware of – after his own self – is the non-self, i.e. his surroundings. This becomes particularly, though not exclusively, evident in the urban environment; the city in past and present structures the collective behaviour and imaginings of its citizens. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the use and importance of space in investigating urban identity and neighborhood identity, with special reference to post-World War II Beyoğlu, the historical central district of Istanbul. Beyoğlu is a case in point for the way in which the dimensions of history, space and identity are closely interconnected. For many former and current residents and frequenters of Beyoğlu the district is at the core of their identity

discourse. Beyoğlu's streetlife has shaped millions of lives and events, which occurred both in a spatial and temporal context. In the words of sociologist Ayfer Bartu: 'Beyoğlu both has a place, and is a place, in many histories'.

**Judith Naeff** (UvA, ASCA)

*Surface City: Billboards, Façades and Urban Identity in Beirut.*

This paper addresses the notion of superficiality in relation to imaginaries of contemporary Beirut. As a city that since the mid-nineteenth century has been unusually hospitable to import products and cultural influence from Europe, Beirut has often been described as imitative, superficial and inauthentic. As such, the concept of superficiality is posed in opposition to essentialist imaginaries of cultural purity. In the context of post-civil-war reconstruction efforts, which have been tapping into the global economy and discourse of neoliberalism, the narrative of superficiality seems to resonate with a global critique of the emptiness and inauthenticity of consumerism and postmodern culture. However, Judith Naeff will argue that in Beirut the surfaces of neoliberal urban development are often understood to be not the gradual replacement of depth by surface, but as a deliberate effort to conceal depth under, or exclude reality from, a surface appearance.

Judith Naeff will discuss two case studies which engage with this subject. The first is the photography project *Beirutopia* (Randa Mirza 2010) which captures billboards advertising real estate in their real urban environment. The second is the novella *As She Once Was* (Hassan Daoud 2013) in which the mirroring façades of the ultra-trendy central district lock the characters in a now that infinitely reflects back on itself inhibiting them to move on. Both the photographer and the author reveal how surfaces not only function as an object of visual appearance but also as a barrier that prevents access or touch. Rather than searching for some form of purity or origin, these artists turn to the unruly elements of urban life that often go unnoticed in an attempt to challenge the exclusionary urban imaginary of the global city.

**Pedram Dibazar** (UvA, ASCA)

*The invisible city: Capturing the street in Tehran.*

In this paper representations of the streets of Tehran in the visual media are explored. First, the ways in which the street photography in Tehran is preoccupied either with two-dimensional façades (walls, murals, graffiti, etc.) will be explained. Missing from the view in such visual representations is the people. After discussing a number of structural concerns hindering the

visualisation of bodies in the Iranian media, alternative ways will then be described in which bodies and the street are brought to the fore. In particular, the spectral bodies and the dark streets in the urban art installation *Census* (Shahab Fotouhi, Nade Razavipour 2003) and Pietro Masturzo's collection of photographs of Tehran rooftops (2009), will be discussed. The argument will be followed that these projects are able to make the street sensible, if not totally visible, by refraining from the more conventional modes of photography.

### **1.3 Citizens and Rights**

This panel investigates issues of law, citizenship and rights in the contemporary Middle East. First, Maaïke Voorhoeve will discuss the use of the Tunisian *Qānūn al-dawla*, generally considered to be the first constitution in the Arab world. She will argue that the *Qānūn al-dawla* had a mere rhetorical function that became part of government propaganda. Secondly, Roel Meijer argues that the Arab uprisings were in large part a confluence of forces demanding citizen's rights, followed by – in most cases – a loss of cohesion and the reinstatement of authoritarianism. Finally, Marten Boekelo wants to show a glimpse of what urban sociology of the public sphere might look like. Herein the notion of how people in 'civil society' and in the neighbourhood come to perceive and practice their role as citizens differently, will be discussed.

Moderator: Prof. Em. Ruud Peters (UvA, Arabic Studies)

**Dr. Maaïke Voorhoeve** (UvA, Faculty of Law, Private Law)

*The first constitution of the Arab world: The Tunisian Qānūn al-dawla between fact and fiction.*

The Tunisian *Qānūn al-dawla* of 1861 is generally considered to be the first constitution in the Arab world. However, the title of the text suggests otherwise: that it carried the name *qānūn* (code) instead of *dustūr* (constitution), raises the question as to what extent 'being the first constitution' was projected on this text later on. This is especially true because another code issued in the same year, a codification of civil and penal law, also carried the term *qānūn* (*qānūn al-jināyāt wa-l-aḥkām al-'urfiya*). Moreover, the *Qānūn al-dawla* did not so much aim at protecting basic rights for Tunisians, but was an implementation of a pact (*ahd al-amān*) between the Tunisian ruler Sadok Bey and the consuls of Britain and France, merely aiming at securing the interests of the latter.

This paper traces the narrative to call the text of 1861 a 'constitution'. It argues that not only in the nationalist movement before independence (led by Thalbi's *Al-hizb al-dustūri*), but also in the authoritarian discourse of presidents Bourguiba and Ben Ali, projecting a constitution back onto the *Qānūn al-dawla* had a mere rhetorical function that became part of government propaganda. By tracing the use of the *Qānūn* in the authoritarian discourse, this paper offers an original and detailed example of the production of truth by the authoritarian regimes, and the power of such state propaganda.

**Dr. Roel Meijer** (Radboud University Nijmegen, Religious Studies)

*Citizenship, citizen rights and the Arab uprisings.*

This paper argues that the Arab uprisings should be regarded as a broad movement that demands civil, political and social rights. These uprisings are the result of the unravelling of the authoritarian bargain in the 1980s and 1990s and the introduction of austerity programs of the IMF. As the state was unable to uphold its side of the bargain, providing free health services, education, pensions, guaranteed salaries, people started to adopt a discourse of rights that increasingly was directed against the state and demanded accountability, political influence, and social justice. These demands and the rising political awareness among youth, women's organizations, trade unions, human rights organizations, and ethnic and religious minorities has led to the emergence of the concept of the citizen (*al-muwātin*) and citizenship (*al-muwātana*) in the sense of an individual who has rights and together with other individuals constitutes a political community. This paper will argue that the rise of a rights' discourse, as opposed to a discourse of identity, strengthened the trend to form broad coalitions between Islamists, leftists and liberals in the run up to the uprisings. It produced what can be called an "overlapping consensus" about certain rights: rule of law, human rights, political representation, parliamentary system, restriction of the executive, the right to establish independent organizations, social justice, etc. It is only after the Arab uprisings that a split occurred within these broad movements between on the one hand "illiberal democrats" and on the other hand "undemocratic liberals". The clash between these two currents has undermined the concept of citizenship in the Arab world. In its place, a new authoritarian discourse of "stability" and "security" is being re-instated. Only in Tunisia, where a broad coalition survived the transitional period, and

established an independent “political field”, based on a certain measure of consensus, the prospects are more optimistic.

**Marten Boekelo** (UvA, Anthropology)

*‘Getting into names’: the order of discourse and the imagination of citizenship in two Beirut publics.*

In this paper Marten Boekelo wants to show a glimpse of what an urban sociology of the public sphere might look like. Such a sociology would pay more systematic attention to the spaces and rhythms of the production, circulation and reception of public discourse as a complement to more conventional approaches that prioritize discursive form, content, or demographic characteristics. The paper is based on fieldwork in two settings in Beirut: one is a popular neighbourhood, where Boekelo tried to get a sense of the mechanisms of real-estate production, how residents dealt with rising real-estate prices, as well as forms of formal and informal social regulation, such as conflict resolution and the mediation of resources (including housing). The second consisted of attending, across town and back, a variety of activities organized by people and organizations that generally self-identified as being part of “civil society”. The analytical point of departure is that the ongoing discussions in the world of civil society and in the neighbourhood can be understood as publics. This paper therefore builds on the framework that Warner has developed in his *Publics and Counterpublics* (2005) to provide one – necessary but insufficient – explanation for the structural similarities and differences between the ways that people in ‘civil society’ and in the neighbourhood discuss shared, but differently framed issues. His notions of internal and material limits of the public can help us throw light on how people come to perceive and practice their role as citizens differently, sometimes to the point of mutual unintelligibility.

[Early afternoon sessions 14:00-16:00](#)

### **2.1 Marriage controversies: public debates and lived experience**

During the last two decades, in the North as well as in the global South, less conventional forms of Muslim marriages, such as unregistered, visiting, or temporary marriages, interreligious or otherwise ‘unequal’ marriages, have become subject of public debate. State officials, religious scholars, women’s organisations, parents and others express concern about youngsters, and especially young and not so young women, entering into such marriages. In

some cases, these forms of marriage are discursively linked to sexual or economic exploitation and religious radicalisation. But how do those involved in these marriages evaluate them? This ERC program investigates when and how these marriages have become subject to public debate. The main empirical focus is, however, on how such marriages are concluded in everyday life. What kinds of marriage forms and wedding celebration are emerging, who are participating in them, and how are they performed? How do gender and religion intersect and how and by whom are these marriages authenticated, authorized or contested as Muslim marriages?

Moderator: Dr. Julie McBrien (UvA, Globalising Culture and the Quest for Belonging)

**Rahma Bavelaar** (UvA, Globalising Culture and the Quest for Belonging)  
*Framing Mixed Marriages in Egypt.*

**Ibtisam Sadegh** (UvA, Globalising Culture and the Quest for Belonging)  
*Marriage Law, Marriage Stories: Muslims in Malta.*

In the past fifty years, Malta's matrimonial legal system has shifted from a religious marriage system where all religious marriages were 'equally' recognised to a civil marriage system; albeit Catholic marriages are granted almost automatic civil effects whereas Muslim marriages remain unrecognised. In exploring this shift and the recent entry of divorce law, I shall in this presentation explore how the Maltese matrimonial system is perceived and experienced by spouses who celebrated a Muslim marriage.

**Annerienke Fioole** (UvA, Globalising Culture and the Quest for Belonging)  
*From Parenting to Marriage: Dealing with transgressions in Morocco?*

The prevailing social and legal norm in Morocco is that sexual relations should only occur within a matrimonial union, yet various aspects of Moroccan society are claimed conducive to extramarital sexual relations. Moroccan women who get pregnant out of wedlock are most visible and vulnerable in facing the stigma and shame conjured up by expressions of female sexuality deemed illicit and illegal. This presentation elucidates how in their life stories and public discourse, concerns about maidenhood and maids invoke the same anxieties, regarding rape, abortion, adoption and above all the holy grail of marriage.

**Prof. dr. Annelies Moors** (UvA, Globalising Culture and the Quest for Belonging)

*Islamic Marriages in the Netherlands: Beyond the Radicalisation Frame.*

In this presentation I discuss the ways in which 'Islamic Marriages' in the Netherlands have become constructed as a problem-space in public and political discourse, which is strongly influenced by reports of national security agencies. I then contrast such constructs with the diverse stories of people who have concluded an Islamic marriage, which point to a great variety of motivations that are very different from this discourse.

**Dr. Vanessa Vroon-Najem** (UvA, Globalising Culture and the Quest for Belonging)

*Conversion to Islam: What does marriage have to do with it?*

Most people – Muslims and non-Muslims alike – believe that women in the Netherlands convert to Islam because of marriage. Conversion is often considered a 'radical' step and framing it as an outgrowth of marriage seems to make it more acceptable. The women I worked with during my research among converts to Islam in Amsterdam, conversely, claimed that their conversion was a well-informed, personal decision. Many of them were single. In this presentation, I will discuss this divergence between the outsider and insider perspective.

**Dina Zbeidy** (UvA, Globalising Culture and the Quest for Belonging)

*Marriage Controversies in Beirut: A Preliminary Note on Categorization.*

In Lebanon, a country with a weak state and a sectarian governmental (and social) system, how do debates and discourses around marriages function in producing, reproducing, and debunking sectarian and national identities? How do people understand themselves and create an opposing "other" through discussions on marriage? This presentation will be based on a recent trip to Beirut where I talked to various Lebanese individuals and families, in addition to Palestinian and Syrian refugees.

## **2.2 Collecting Islam in Europe**

The speakers will address collection practices, museum exhibitions and narratives in Europe, that are related to the Islamic and/or Arabic world. The choices that are being made in selecting and presenting the artefacts, the art historical, archaeological and ethnographical approaches to the objects and the issues museums stumble upon will be discussed in this panel. Moderator: Dr. Maaïke van Berkel (UvA, History)

**Dr. Mirjam Hoijsink** (UvA, Arts and Culture Studies)

*Islam as an issue. Dilemmas in the nineteenth century Museums of Antiquity.*

Whilst the acquisition of material culture from antiquity (Greek, Byzantine, Hindu-Buddhist) in the Ottoman world from 1819 on was legitimized as being 'saved' from Muslim rulers, gradually the first Islamic artefacts from the Muslim World entered the museums for art and antiquity in Europe. Due to changes in the geopolitical order during the nineteenth century (reforms in Ottoman Empire, imperialism and colonisation) Islam became an issue of importance in Dutch governance and public opinion. Scholarly work on Muslim culture, predominantly based upon texts, was embedded in Oriental Studies. The knowledge of the material culture became part of archaeology and ethnography. Both disciplines, deeply based in nineteenth century science, underwent major developments, not to say a continuous work in progress, with much discussed overlaps and frequent changes in the rather confusing classification practices of their material. Muslim culture became excluded from the Leiden Museum of Antiquities in the 1830s, because the museum aimed to collect 'dead' cultures. Meanwhile, some artefacts from the Muslim world were even so kept in storage and 'Coptic', Christian Egyptian artefacts- in contradiction to the idea of 'dead cultures' were a serious part of the collection policy. An alternative destination was only at present from the 1860s, when the National Ethnographic Museum in Leiden opened its doors. Discussions on new acquisitions from 'strange' cultures were held amongst leading scholars in the Dutch Society of Sciences in Amsterdam. In close co-operation with ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs and Colonial Affairs and with museum directors in The Hague, Amsterdam and Leiden, decisions were made about the future location for newly acquired Muslim culture. These correspondences form rich sources for a hermeneutic study in the understanding of the nineteenth century attitude towards the presentation and narratives of material culture from the Muslim world in the museums, closely intertwined with the public sphere.

**Giulia Gallini** (Independent researcher in Islamic art)

*Italian orientalism and collecting practices. Two enameled silver plaques from a private collection.*

Two enameled silver plaques, kept in a Sicilian private collection, can be useful to illustrate the collecting practices of nineteenth century Sicily. They are the exact copies of two funerary slabs, dated to the tenth – eleventh century found in the area of Naples around 1690. From epigraphic and decorative

peculiarities it is possible to state that the two silver counterparts were actually produced in Sicily or Southern Italy in the nineteenth century, most probably for the local art market. This production can be seen as the result of the collectors' taste of the period.

In the nineteenth century, when the interest in Islamic art arose in Europe, scholarship and collecting in the field were certainly intertwined with historical events. In Italy, and in particular in Sicily, the Orientalist tradition was predominantly influenced by Michele Amari and the narrative he proposed in his *Storia degli arabi di Sicilia* (1854-1872). The Arab-Islamic past of the island is used to state the cultural and historical specificity of Sicily compared to the Italian mainland. This is understandable in the wider context of the Risorgimento, a period of major change in the political configuration of Italy, that eventually brought to its unification. The narrative Amari proposed can thus have affected the collecting practices in the region. In the spirit of the time it is plausible to think that collectors of Islamic art were influenced by this stress on the Sicilian and South Italian specificity: the Islamic art collecting in Southern Italy didn't follow only the pan-European taste for the Orient, but was shaped on a local representation of the exotic.

**Dr. Luit Mols** (Netherlands Interuniversity School for Islamic Studies)

*Collecting the Arabian Peninsula: late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Dutch envoys and academics.*

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the collection of the Rijksmuseum Volkenkunde in Leiden was enriched with a large variety of ethnographic artefacts from the Arabian Peninsula. The collected objects vary from household goods (some simple, others luxurious), musical instruments, clothing and jewelry to objects that relate to the Hajj. They now constitute one of the oldest ethnographic collections of Western Arabia worldwide. Although simultaneously objects from the Ottoman Empire and Persia reached the museum via donations of envoys and acquisitions from Dutch traders, the number of artefacts relating to Western Arabia exceeded the number of other Middle Eastern and West-Asian artefacts by far.

It was Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje who almost a century ago donated the largest collection of Mecca and Jeddah related objects: some 237 in all. Not just the scale, but the person of Snouck Hurgronje and his observations of daily life in Mecca during his stay there in 1885 contributed to the fame of this collection. However, a number of envoys at the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah, such as J.A. Kruyt had already paved the way and had

started donating objects to the museum from 1880 onwards. In a public address in the early 1880s Kruyt actually emphasizes the importance of collecting ethnographic artefacts. Irrespective of its importance, both this collection and its collectors have up to now been understudied. In this paper I would like to shed more light on the scope of the collection and on those who brought it together and their intentions.

A first step in studying the collection is subdividing it into functional categories. This will give insight into the material culture of western Arabia in the late nineteenth century, the lives of the inhabitants of Mecca and Jeddah, and the status of the crafts at that time. The categories will possibly also shed some light on selection preferences of the collectors and the picture they wanted to portray of Western Arabia. These observations will be complemented with archival material from the archive of the Rijksmuseum Volkenkunde and the archive of the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah at the National Archives.

**Alexandra Van Puyvelde** (Royal Museums of Arts and History Brussels)

*The collection 'Art from the Islamic World' in the Royal Museums of Art & History in Brussels: its history and presentation.*

From 1889 onwards a great part of the objects of the Brussels Royal Museums of Art and History was lodged in the actual building in the Jubelpark or Parc du Cinquantenaire. At that moment, the museum was named 'Koninklijke Musea voor Sier- en Nijverheidskunst' or 'Musées Royaux des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels'. It was thus a museum of decorative and industrial art. In the spirit of the anti-industrial Arts & Crafts movement of that time, this kind of museums wanted to promote traditional craftsmanship and decorative arts and offer examples of techniques, forms and motifs to inspire designers and manufacturers. Objects, not in the least those with an origin in the Islamic world, were thus acquired as examples of high technical skill or perfect form or decoration. They were collected, classified and exhibited according to materials and techniques. This way of acquiring in the first decades explains the character of the collection, which is, among others, rather disparate. It would take until 1960 before the objects from the Islamic world would be brought together and united in an Islamic art section and a first curator was appointed. In the 1990s, the exhibition room devoted to the art from the Islamic world was no longer suited to the requirements of a museum and had to be closed. It took till 2008 before the new gallery could be inaugurated. During this contribution, we will discuss the lay-out of the exhibition room,

the choices that have been made, the leitmotif(s) in the presentation and the approach of the objects.

**Mirjam Shatanawi** (National Museum for World Cultures, Leiden)

*Indonesia and Islamic art: the historiography of a neglected heritage.*

A glimpse at some of the most commonly used survey books of Islamic art and architecture (e.g. Brend 1991, Hillenbrand 1999, Blair and Bloom 1997, Irwin 1997) is revealing: none of them devote any attention to Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country. Likewise, Western museum collections and exhibitions, with very few exceptions, limit themselves to Islamic art from the Middle Eastern regions, and perhaps, Central Asia, North India and Andalusia. It seems that with regard to the study of Islamic art Indonesia has fallen off the map. The exclusion of Indonesia from the field of Islamic art can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century when Western art historians and museums started to study the artefacts they collected from Muslim regions, and Islamic art as a field of enquiry emerged.

This paper will discuss a set of objects from Indonesia's Muslim areas, that were collected during the colonial period, to understand the historical conditions leading to the Western disregard of Indonesian Islamic art and to investigate alternative approaches to the concept of 'Islamic art' in an Indonesian context. The objects hail from the densely populated, majority Muslim islands of Java and Sumatra and were collected in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to become part of the collections of the Colonial Museum (now Tropenmuseum) in Amsterdam. The paper will investigate the various meanings attached to the objects by their Indonesian makers and users and their re-appropriation in the hands of Dutch collectors and museum staff. The central question is how ideas of the 'Islamic' are expressed in and mediated through the object, and then interpreted, defined and classified in practices of museum collecting and interpretation. Such an assessment can illuminate if and how Indonesian artefacts can be connected to the field of Islamic art.

### **2.3 Critical perspectives on Israel/Palestine**

The central aim of this panel is to discuss current critical research on Israel/Palestine. Herein both the opportunities and the difficulties of critical research on Israel/Palestine will be discussed. Presenting more questions than answers, the presentations consciously aim to spark debate on our own role as Middle Eastern scholars in thinking, creating and shaping “the Israel-Palestine conflict”.

Moderator: Dr. Anne de Jong (UvA, Transnational Configurations, Conflict and Governance)

**Dr. Noa Roei** (UvA, Literary Studies)

*Militarism and Israeli art.*

**Dr. Martijn Dekker** (UvA, Social Sciences)

*Security from Below: critical approaches to research in the Palestinian Territories.*

**Lior Volinz** (UvA, Governance and Inclusive Development)

*Securing the ethnocentric city: Public-Private security assemblages in Jerusalem.*

The transformation of Jerusalem’s security and control mechanisms into a multilayered complex system of which many parts are privatized and outsourced is the focal point of this paper, which presents an ongoing ethnographic research. The research project seeks to explore the creation of new structures and practices associated with Public-Private security assemblage in Jerusalem, asking how do such emerging assemblages (re)produce and enforces a regime of differentiated citizenship and new forms of hybrid governance. Rather than subscribing to the conceptualization of neoliberal security privatization as eroding state power, an alternative analysis of the state-market relations, one which observes the bolstering of state power, rather than its diminishment, through the prism of privatized security operations and in the context of a prominent state-led project, will be suggested.

Jerusalem is a city engulfed in an intractable conflict, a site of military occupation and unrecognized annexation by the state of Israel, as well as an arena of continuous negotiation of borders and identity wherein rival actors and narratives strive for domination and engage in spatial contestation. The transformed security practices in Jerusalem, embedded in an ethnicized security discourse, can offer a vantage point from which to observe emerging

praxes and conceptions of citizenship and the alternating relations of Jerusalem's citizens and non-citizens with sovereign state and non-state Israeli actors, enacted through performances and praxes of security encounters at sites of friction. Building upon a conceptualization of citizenship as a range of practices, access to resources and the right to have rights, I contend that both the provision of security and the absence of protection are manifested through praxes and performances which construct new citizenships; and it is precisely through the cracks created by the neoliberal disassembly of the state that new citizenships emerge – unequal and in correlation to market value, yet new reciprocal relations with the state nonetheless. The intersecting interests of the free-market economy with that of a military occupation continuously enact differentiating and discriminating policies in Jerusalem, at the same time that market logics reconfigure the unequal relations between Israeli state actors and the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem, enabling new differentiated citizenships to come to the fore.

**Dr. Anne de Jong** (UvA, Transnational Configurations, Conflict and Governance)

*Peace versus Justice: Normalization, Co-resistance, BDS and other questions of power in Palestine.*

Following the central aim of the panel to discuss current critical research on Palestine-Israel and to explore future possibilities for critical engagement, this paper is structured in two parts. First, De Jong will set out her past research on Palestinian and Israeli nonviolent resistance. Focusing on unequal power relations and the ambiguous difference between peace activism, normalization and co-resistance, she will emphasize the role of the researcher in engaged research on social justice in general and Palestine in particular. It will be argued that describing Israel and Palestine in terms of binary conflict is not academically neutral but rather consists of a paradigm that 1) reinforces rigid binary categories which does not reflect reality on the ground; 2) legitimizes unequal power relations, and 3) ignores the everyday lived experience of oppression in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Second, a brief introduction into her current research on the role of Palestine within transnational global justice activism, will draw out both opportunities and obstacles for critical research on Palestine/Israel. What is critical research? Is critical scholarship on Palestine, Palestine/Israel or Israel possible or desired? How can international and interdisciplinary scholarly cooperation hamper or further this kind of power-centered research? And

what is the role – should be the role- of the 2005 Palestinian civil society call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) within academic scholarship on this contested region?

**Mikki Stelder** (UvA, Literary Studies)

*Working through silence.*

The provisional title that was given to our panel was Critical Israel Studies. It is rhetorically almost too easy, but I want to ask: What remains silent within this notion of the “critical”?

For this paper, I discuss some of the findings of my dissertation. I look at the academic and public discourse written by Israeli academics, activists and journalists on Israel’s early lesbigay movement of the 1980s-90s. Palestinian and allied activists and scholars point out that Israel's contemporary public discourse on sexual rights and freedoms aims to brand Israel as a democratic state and diverts attention from Israel's violation of Palestinian rights. They call this pinkwashing.

To someone in favor of legal inclusion of sexual minorities, the increased integration of Jewish-Israeli gays and lesbians into Israel's public and legal fabric might be something to rejoice in. Yet, if I look at the way in which the early institutionalization and distribution of gay rights is articulated in absentia of the continued dispossession, silencing and displacement of Palestinians, I want to explore the ways in which narratives of inclusion and human rights can come to reify a system of structural inequality and settler colonialism instead of rupture it.

I will discuss what role sexual politics (the articulation, construction, imagination and regulation of sex and sexuality) plays within the settler colonial context of Israel/Palestine and how this paved the way for Israel's pinkwashing campaign to emerge.

To conclude: What does it mean to study and engage in sexual politics in the context of Israel/Palestine critically and what is our accountability as scholars, writing within the Global North, engaging in this context?

**3.1 Historical sources in dialectology: reading pre-modern linguistics of the Arabic language**

This panel discusses issues encountered by academics while using historical sources of the Arabic language. Ahmad al-Jallad will elaborate on the history of the Arabic definite articles, herein using sources of pre-Islamic Arabic. Then, Liesbeth Zack will discuss several of the issues she encountered while collecting data on nineteenth century Cairo Arabic. The final paper, presented by Otto Zwartjes, will contribute to the historiography of descriptive linguistics in early modern Spain.

Moderator: Dr Margreet Dorleijn (UvA, Linguistics)

**Dr. Ahmad Al-Jallad** (Leiden University, Leiden Institute for Area Studies)

*Tracing the history of the Arabic definite articles: a new perspective from Old (pre-Islamic) Arabic.*

The goal of this talk is to demonstrate how pre-Islamic documentary sources can change our view of the history and development of Arabic. I will focus on one of the most iconic features of the language, the definite article *al-*. This form of the article—with various patterns of assimilation—is found in nearly all the modern dialects of Arabic, Classical Arabic, and the language of the Qur'an. While the Arab Grammarians documented other forms of the definite article, namely, *am* and *an*, and these are encountered in some Yemeni dialects today, the comparative method would suggest that such marginal forms are secondary. Consequently, the reconstruction of *al-* to Proto-Arabic would seem uncontroversial. In the increase in the availability of epigraphic sources from the pre-Islamic period, and advances in their interpretation, however, challenges this view. I will present various pieces of Old Arabic evidence from Syria and North Arabia which suggests that the earliest stages of Arabic did not have a definite article at all. I hypothesize that the pattern of overtly marking definiteness spread to Arabic through contact with Northwest Semitic languages. This scenario will explain not only the variety of definite article forms that we encounter in the epigraphic record, but also the unique distribution of the article vis-à-vis nunation—the article does not occur with nunation in the singular and broken plurals but does in the dual and sound plurals. I conclude with a discussion on how the addition of documentary sources to the study of Arabic's early linguistic history constitutes a paradigm

shift in the way we conceive of Old Arabic and the developmental trajectories of later forms of the language.

**Dr. Liesbeth Zack** (UvA, Arabic Studies)

*The reliability of older linguistic documents: establishing the quality of sources on nineteenth century Cairo Arabic.*

When doing historical linguistic research one has to depend on the available written sources. In the case of the project “The making of a capital dialect: language change in nineteenth century Cairo”, there are many sources in colloquial Egyptian Arabic from the nineteenth century. The problem presented in this paper therefore does not lie in the number of available sources, but rather in establishing the quality of the sources. In order to determine what the language looked like in the nineteenth century, one needs accurate sources describing that language. However, the language at that time was different than the language of today. How does a researcher describe a language, if he does not know if the original sources describing this language are accurate?

Nineteenth century sources of Egyptian Arabic are problematic in many ways. First of all, there are the sources written by Egyptians. These can be either grammars or textbooks written for foreigners wishing to study the language, or literary texts written in the dialect for fellow Egyptians. In both cases, the influence of Standard Arabic can often be felt, or the text could contain provincialisms, and therefore these texts are not always reliable sources for the dialect of Cairo. Also the Arabic script, which does not write short vowels, does not help to interpret the linguistic data. An example of such a problematic text is the famous *Traité de la langue arabe vulgaire* by Muhammad al-Tantawi (1848). On the other hand, works written by Western scholars have problems of their own. This paper discusses several of the issues encountered while collecting data on nineteenth century Cairo Arabic and aims at establishing a way of extracting accurate data from the available sources.

**Dr. Otto Zwartjes** (UvA, Spanish language and culture)

*Fifteenth century linguistic Spanish translated into Arabic.*

The main purpose of this talk is to analyze Spanish linguistic terms and their translations into Arabic in Pedro de Alcalá's (c.1455–post 1505) *Vocabulista arauiga en letra castellana*, the first printed missionary Spanish–Arabic dictionary, which appeared together with his *Arte para ligeramente saber la*

*lengua arauiga* (1505). In 1981 William Cowan published a list of Arabic grammatical and linguistic terms in the grammatical treatise (*Arte*). As will be demonstrated, Pedro de Alcalá's dictionary is an even more important source for the study of Arabic linguistic terms as they circulated among 'the wise alfaquis' — the informants of Pedro de Alcalá — in Andalusia and Granada after the Conquest of 1492. In general, Pedro de Alcalá follows the *Vocabulario español-latino* (c. 1495) composed by Antonio de Nebrija (1441/44–1520), but it is obvious that he added a number of linguistic terms in his *Vocabulista* not found in Nebrija's work. The Arabic terms have a long history and had been developed for the Arabic language. These terms are analyzed in detail. Some of them are obviously erroneous, others are correct, and often the Arabic technical terms do not correspond (entirely) to the Spanish source entries, since technical terms in both languages have been developed for the description of different languages. This paper contributes to the historiography of descriptive linguistics in early modern Spain and particularly highlights which strategies Pedro de Alcalá followed when translating Graeco-Latin concepts into Arabic.

### **3.2 Negotiating the past: the dynamics of heritage and memory in Turkey, Palestine/Israel**

This panel investigates negotiations of 'pastness', tradition, and modernity in the making of contemporary political spaces in Turkey and Palestine/Israel. In both contexts, there have been marked shifts in recent years in the public visibility and use of the past as a vehicle for politics. We are interested in examining similarities and differences in the ways in which different groups vying for power and a new public visibility activate different visions of the past to achieve their goals (or else they resort to a radical negation of the past and tradition by invocations of a radical modernity and 'contemporaneity').

Moderator: Dr Robin Boast (UvA, Media Studies)

**Dr. Chiara De Cesari** (UvA, European Studies)

*Restoring the Past, Claiming Rights in the Present: Uses of Heritage in Old Hebron.*

In this paper, the production of urban space in Hebron will be discussed, as the clash of two radically different spatial projects that both renegotiate the past: a colonial neo-biblical project and a heritage project of rehabilitation targeting the restoration of both the urban and social fabric of the city. The Old City of Hebron is an important religious and historic site partly occupied

by Israeli settlers who claim deep biblical roots there. On the other hand, a local Palestinian organization, the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, has engaged in a major urban regeneration project in the effort not only to conserve Hebron's decaying historic monuments but also to stop the expansion of the settlements and to repopulate the progressively emptied and militarized city core. Competing memories and histories of the city are being restored to support the rights claims of different groups.

**Dr. Ihab Saloul** (UvA, Arts and Culture Studies)

*Competing Memories: Fragile Pasts in an Ongoing Present.*

This talk explores the ways in which the concept of 'competing memories' can function as an analytical framework for negotiating the past in the present. The analysis will focus on how contemporary Palestinian and Israeli heritage and memory practices intervene in socio-political conflict by re-articulating the traumas of the past not as sealed historical sites but as fragile entities of an ongoing present.

**Dr. Rosita D'Amora** (visiting scholar at UvA, Università del Salento)

*Rebranding the Empire: Contrasting Performances of the Ottoman Past.*

In this paper, the debate over the nature and legacy of the Ottoman past in Turkey will be investigated. Drawing upon recent studies questioning the assumption that the new Republic of Turkey was founded on a strong rejection of the Ottoman Empire, this paper will compare *early* performances of Turkey's resuscitation of its past with the more recent and all-encompassing Ottoman revivalism. In particular, the analysis will focus on how contrasting memories of the Ottoman past have been constantly re-articulated, used and reinvented in popular culture.

**Lora Sariaslan** (UvA, European Studies)

*A Strategic Modernity on the Shores of the Bosphorus: Istanbul Museum of Modern Art.*

Istanbul Museum of Modern Art (Istanbul Modern) is Turkey's first private museum to have a collection and organizes both Turkish and non-Turkish modern and contemporary art exhibitions. Originally planned to open to public in April 2005, through the desire of the then Prime Minister Erdoğan, was opened on 11 December 2004, six days before the meeting that focused on the accession of Turkey into the EU. Located in a converted warehouse on the shores of the Bosphorus, Istanbul Modern turned into the perfect

example of Turkey embracing Europe through its architecture, presentation, programming, even its restaurant throughout the accessioning process. In my talk, I would like to focus on how Istanbul Modern has been a platform for Turkey's desire to position itself closer to the West, and namely the EU.

### **3.3 Images of the other: causes and consequences of prejudice and stereotype**

This panel investigates the perception of the 'other', herein discussing the causes and consequences of prejudice and stereotypes. Anja van Heelsum will give insight in the complex situation in which representatives of organisations find themselves in coping with prejudice. Subsequently, Annemarike Stremmelaar will elaborate on Muslim anti-Semitism in the Netherlands as a historical phenomenon. Finally, Annet Breure offers a discourse analysis of Iraqi representations of Yazidis in the period immediately preceding the calamities of the summer of 2014.

Moderator: Dr Robbert Woltering (UvA, Arabic Studies, Director of ACMES)

**Dr. Anja van Heelsum** (UvA, Challenges to Democratic Representation)  
*Coping with anti-Muslim sentiments, how representatives of organisations handle prejudice.*

In this paper I will start with the theoretical insights that Allport and his followers have developed about how the victims of prejudice cope with the stigmatisation they encounter. Based on the 90 interviews with representatives of Muslim organisations that took place in 2011 within the EURISLAM project, I will develop a typology of reactions. I will present qualitative material and give insight in the complex situation in which the representatives of organisations find themselves. On the one hand, there is the public opinion that has become critical on the way in which Muslims operate. On the other hand, there are the Muslim communities, in which individuals sometimes radicalise. My analysis will take the situation in the six countries of research into account, and focus on the Turkish, Moroccan, Pakistani and former Yugoslav immigrant community.

**Dr. Annemarike Stremmelaar** (the NIOD institute for War, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam) *A history of Muslim anti-Semitism in the Netherlands.*

Over the last decade, new forms of anti-Semitism in the Netherlands and surrounding countries have been attributed to people identified as "Muslim":

citizens with ancestries in Muslim-majority countries, though often not first-generation migrants themselves. This paper analyzes 'Muslim anti-Semitism' in the Netherlands as a historical phenomenon. It is based on an inventory of anti-Semitic incidents and source materials coming from Turkish organizations in the Netherlands from the 1980s up to today. An examination of these data gives an insight in the emergence and transformation of anti-Semitism within migrant communities and how manifestations of anti-Semitism were related to processes of migration, discrimination, and religious or national self-identification.

**Annet Breure** (Independent researcher)

*Images of the Yazidi: unknown, unloved. Social and political processes from text construction to physical events.*

In this paper the results of a study are presented that connects theories of text construction, identity formation and the power of language in order to analyse the causes, and functionalities of images of the Yazidi minority in Iraqi Arabic texts. Building on established theories of amongst others Aristotle, Sartre, Bourdieu and Arendt the relationship between the world of written texts as words of reference and the physical realities of violence and marginalization is detected.

The Yazidi community in Iraq lives in the mountainous areas of the north. They have traditionally formed an isolated and closed group from other peoples in Iraqi society. They have been marginalized and persecuted under Ottoman rule as well as in recent times under Saddam Hussein's regime. The Yazidi community has not only faced violence and discrimination from the part of authorities, but also very recently from the part of extremist groups, such as IS last summer. There has been a build-up to this violence. After 2003 the general security situation in Iraq deteriorated, but especially towards minorities the violence increased. These negative physical events have been accompanied by negative images in texts about the Yazidi. The most widespread image portrays the Yazidi as devil worshippers. The social process of comparing identities plays a role in the emergence of this image. Other images and their respective contexts will be presented as well. The role of different types of discourses, political factors and the position of the writer as well as the reader will be discussed, illustrated by cases of recent Arabic texts from internet fora and Iraqi newspapers.

### **3.4 Smaller politics: struggle and contention beneath the surface of the regional state**

The Arab uprisings have emphasised the importance and necessity of micro-level bottom up research in order to complement the dominant trends of macro-level analysis. This panel wants to shed light on ‘smaller politics’, that is to focus on politics on the local level. While there is a significant amount of literature on the democratic and revolutionary transitions at the national level, little focuses on the local level. First, Rivka Azoulay will elaborate on the latest political upheavals in Kuwait. Then, Vivienne Matthies-Boon will highlight some of the problems she encountered, while (and after) researching trauma amongst activists in (post-revolutionary) Egypt. Lastly, Emanuela Dalmasso will discuss municipal politics in post-revolutionary Tunisia.

Moderator: Paul Aarts (UvA, Political Economy and Transnational Governance)

#### **Rivka Azoulay (Guest researcher UvA)**

*Kuwait: When regional turmoil exasperates domestic political struggle.*

Kuwait is an interesting case in point: a small country, located between three larger neighbours (Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran), its society is divided along sectarian, tribal and centre/periphery lines. Since the inception of its semi-parliamentary regime in 1962, these diverse components were widely exposed to regional ideologies and as a result its internal stability is fragile and tied to external developments. The ruling Al-Sabah have had to face evolving forms of opposition, corresponding to different phases of political “awakening” in the three traditional social groups in Kuwait: first the Sunni elite supporters of pan-Arabism and Gamal Abdel Nasser, then the rise of Shiite political Islam seduced by the Iraqi daw’a and the Khomeini’s revolutionary view, and latest, a gradual trend of peripheral tribal empowerment coinciding, partially but not exclusively, with the emergence of Sunni Islamist movements.

No Gulf country has been immune to the protest wave of the so-called Arab Spring; yet with few exceptions in Bahrain and the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia, the protest movements mainly exhibited reformist objectives. In Kuwait, in February 2011, the first-ever sustained *Bidūn*-organised protest sparked off in the faraway Kuwaiti suburbs; in the city centre, the already chaotic parliamentary life went through a particularly acute crisis, culminating with the storming of the *Majlis al-Umma* and the

first-ever fall and replacement of the appointed Prime Minister under popular pressure on 28 November 2011.

Far from marking a rupture, the latest upheavals in Kuwait are part and parcel of a broader trend seeing the growing assertiveness of previously marginalized groups notably the part of the population integrated later in the citizenry and as such more or less excluded from the initial “social pact.” Interestingly, there is a general reluctance, with the notable exception of the *Bidūns* and the new generation of human rights activists, on the part of Kuwaitis to claim that their movement is part of the wider Arab Spring: supposedly this clears them from any suspicious intent of planning to shake the basis of the monarchical regime. The protests and agitation in Kuwait seem to represent, in a paroxysmal form, yet another round of the political game that has been going on since 2003 in the oil-rich emirate. However, the shifting regional context changed the equilibrium of forces as most of the actors in presence are having, like the precedent opposition waves in the past, transnational affinities. As so often in Kuwait’s history, regional turmoil does influence the delicate equilibrium between domestic political forces and the ruler.

**Dr. Vivienne Matthies-Boon** (UvA, Political Economy and Transnational Governance)

*Mental Health and Revolution: Trauma Amongst Egyptian Activists.*

Too often the personal impacts of great political upheavals such as the Egyptian uprising are overlooked. This paper seeks to correct this lacuna in the literature by highlighting the severe personal but also social strains the uprising (and particularly its disappointing aftermath) have caused. Based on testimonial research conducted with activists across the political spectrum, from Salafists to Muslim Brothers and from Socialists and to liberals, this paper will relay deeply personal stories that will bring to life the human dimensions behind the political upheavals.

**Dr. Emanuela Dalmasso** (UvA, Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences)

*The Transitional Momentum in Tunisia from a Local Politics Perspective.*

This paper seeks to better understand civil society-state interactions in democratic transitions. While there is a significant literature on democratic transitions at the national level, little focuses on the local level. Yet it is at the local level where power structures reflect and stabilize the national political system. Bringing together the theoretical bodies of literature on civil society and on path dependency, the proposed paper examines municipal politics in

post-revolutionary Tunisia and specifically its Special Delegations (SDs), the bodies nominated by the Prime Minister to govern the country's municipalities based on recommendations by local civil society organizations. Tunisia's SDs provide an excellent lens through which to examine the dynamics between local CSOs and state powers during the current transitional period. While created by local Committees for the Protection of the Revolution, SDs remain under the pre-revolutionary state structure, namely the Ministry of Interior. SDs thus reflect the often conflicting interests of the state and national level governing parties, local level parties and civil society. The outcome of these power struggles is shaping the very transition itself. To understand these dynamics, this paper will take an in-depth look at the municipality of Hammamat. This paper is based on extensive interviews from 2012 and 2014 with civil society activists, municipal councilors and state officials active or in power both before and after the revolution.