



ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL KOLLEG.

History and Society during the
Mamluk Era (1250 - 1517)



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Senior Fellows



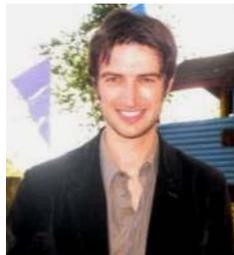
Prof. Dr. Reuven AMITAI

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

Professor AMITAI is a fellow at ASK from October 2014 to September 2015.

His project deals with:

Between Franks and Ottomans: Southern Bilad al-Sham in the post-Crusader period



Prof. Dr. Jo VAN STEENBERGEN

Ghent University, Belgium

Professor VAN STEENBERGEN will stay as a fellow at ASK from October 2014 to June 2015.

During his fellowship he focuses on:

Empire and State Formation in Late Medieval Egypt and Syria

Junior Fellows



Dr. Kate RAPHAEL

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

Project:

The Mosques of Palestine from the early Sixteenth Century to Eighteenth: Architectural Development and Spatial Distribution

Doctoral Students



Iman ABDULFATTAH, M.A.

University of Bonn

Project:

A Sultan and his Monument: The Role of the Complex of Qalawun in the Development of Mamluk Architecture



**Hayrettin AYDIN,
M. A.**
University of Bonn

Project:

Die Eroberung Ägyptens und ihre Bedeutung für die macht-, wirtschafts- und handelspolitischen Ambitionen des Osmanischen Reichs im 16. Jahrhundert

18th – 19th December 2014 – International Conference

Mamluk Historiography Revisited – Narratological Perspectives

A work of history, like any other composition (written or oral) is, first and foremost, a construct of language. The events recorded, the actors in those events, the circumstances and locations in which the events took place, and the cultural, societal, or political or religious details which surrounded them, are filtered not only through the writer's sensibility, bias, or agenda, but, most importantly, through the medium of language. Thus Mamluk historical works are not merely records of the past, but literary texts that may be approached through literary analysis. The Mamluk historian's implicit contract with his audience is that he is providing a true record of events.

Taking this assumption seriously, the participants of the conference searched for ways to deal with the chronicles and biographical dictionaries of the Mamluk period. On the one hand, these sources contain information about historical events, social life and economic developments. On the other hand, however, the fact that this information is expressed through the medium of language makes a literary analysis even more important than the mere search for information to support previously made hypotheses. The participants, therefore, presented case studies in which they analyzed chronicles, biographical dictionaries and poems literarily and showed that in some cases the information changed depending on the style of the author or genre of the source.



Jews in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Periods

The conference “Muslim-Jewish Relations in the Middle Ages: Jews in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Periods (1171-1517)” aimed to examine and re-examine various aspects of Muslim-Jewish relations during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods (1171-1517). This period is usually seen as a period of decline among Jewish communities in the Muslim world. This suggested deterioration is related to a gradual change in Islamic societies that started in this period, and the general decline in the security and economic situation, especially noticeable in the prominent Islamic centers of this period, Egypt and Syria. Gathering scholars of both Islamic and Jewish history, the conference aimed to examine several aspects of Jewish life under the Ayyubid and Mamluk period in order to bring about a more precise assessment of the state of the Jews during this long period.

The discussions focused mainly on the following issues: the measure of tolerance of the Mamluk rulers and the Muslim populace toward the Jews; Jews in government positions and as court physicians; Jewish conversion to Islam; representation of Jews in Muslim historiography; and, the relation of Jews to the Sufi Islamic thinking and practices.

Upcoming

9th – 13th March - **Spring School**
(in German)

Religious normative discourses

Ulrich Haarmann Memorial Lectures

10/10/2014 – Prof. Dr. Shmuel MOREH
(Hebrew University, Israel)

*The Perfect ‘Ālim according to
‘Abd ar-Rahmān al-Ġabartī’s Historical Work*

The Egyptian historian al-Ġabartī (d. 1825) composed his *magnum opus*, *‘Aġā’ib al-ātār* (The Marvelous Compositions), with the intention to reform Muslim moral system and values of both rulers and *‘ulamā’* in Egypt. Being himself a *‘ālim*, he put emphases upon the role of the *‘ulamā’* as guardians of the faith as well as the moral system and values. According to al-Ġabartī, most of the ideal *‘ālims* were Sufis. In his lecture, Shmuel Moreh elaborated on the image of a perfect *‘ālim* and his duties within the society, that al-Ġabartī drew in his *‘Aġā’ib al-ātār*.



From left to right:
Dr. Jens BAKKER, Prof. Dr. Shmuel MOREH,
Dr. Saleh ABBASI, Prof. Dr. Reuven AMITAI,
Prof. Dr. Stefan WILD

27/10/2014 – Prof. Dr. Éric VALLET
(Université de Paris, France)

The Karimis: An Enigma Solved?

For a long time, scholars of Mamluk studies struggled with the appropriate understanding of the term *kārimī* which is found in chronicles and biographical dictionaries. Usually the term has been translated and understood as a designation of Muslim merchants of Egyptian and Syrian. However, the use of the term in the chronicles and biographical dictionaries often does not go with this simple translation. Sometimes, a person is named a *kārimī* while in another context no reference to his *kārimī* status is found. Or, even ships were designated with this term.

Eric Vallet argued convincingly that the term designates a certain navigational trading season from Egypt to Yemen. Hence, all ships and merchants which were participating at this season were collectively called *kārimī*.



10/11/2014 – Prof. Dr. Warren C. SCHULZ
(DePaul University, Chicago, USA)

*Numismatic Nights: Coins and Money in
Alf Layla wa-Layla*

In his lecture, Warren Schulz showed ways how to make numismatic useable for the analysis of narrative texts. His focus lied on the mention of coins in the stories of the Arabian Nights. Through an analysis of different manuscript, Schulz was able to date these manuscripts depending on the mention or non-mention of the *Ašrafī* dinar.



Upcoming

23/02/2015 – Prof. Dr. Kaddour OUAHRANI
(Tlemcen, Algeria)

*Al-Qalqašandī and his Historiographic
Methodology*

International Research Colloquium

31/10/2014 – Prof. Dr. Hans Georg MAJER
(University of Munich)

Ottoman History as Seen by Baroque Artists

14/11/2014 – Dr. Petra SCHMIDL
(University of Frankfurt)

Astrology and Divination in Rasulid Yemen

28/11/2014 – Zakariya BEN BADHANN, M.A.
(University of Bonn)

Historical and Archaeological Evaluation of the Umayyad Economy

05/12/2014 – Prof. Dr. Hatice AYNUR
(Istanbul Şehir University)

Digitizing Ottoman History: Database of Ottoman Inscription

12/12/2014 – Prof. Dr. Stefan ROHDEWALD
(University of Gießen)

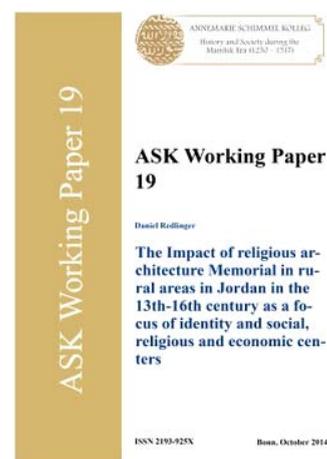
Polish-Ottoman Political Communication as Part of European Security Policies in the late 18th Century

Publications

Working Paper

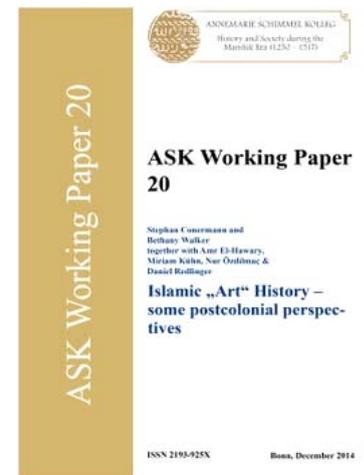
Nr. 19 – Daniel REDLINGER: *The Impact of religious architecture Memorial in rural areas in Jordan in the 13th-16th century as a focus of identity and social, religious and economic centers*

This Working Paper describes the starting point for a post-doctoral project on the social, economic and political meaning and function of memorial architecture constructed during the Mamluk and early Ottoman time in a geographical area that today belongs to the kingdom of Jordan. The post-doctoral project aims at building up a sound documentation of these hitherto neglected structures of the Mamluk and early Ottoman Memorial architecture in this area; it will include a study of their function for the region, but also for the central power in Cairo and Syria in pre-modern times. An important issue of the post doc-project will be to unveil which images of history materialize in the architecture and how they were adapted and exploited by different groups from the past until today. This Working Paper provides also a short insight into the results of two short field researches in 2013 and 2014, which were intended to gain a first insight into the structures, forms, condition and accessibility of the buildings. The methodological work in this post-doctoral project is intended to be interdisciplinary. The analysis is not limited to a philological, historical-critical evaluation of written source material, or an archaeological approach but also includes art historical analysis of the existing buildings and the technic of interviews in the overall consideration of memorial architecture in Jordan.



**Nr. 20 – Stephan CONERMANN and Bethany WALKER
together with Amr EL-HAWARY, Miriam KÜHN, Nur ÖZDILMAÇ &
Daniel REDLINGER: *Islamic „Art“ History – some postcolonial
perspectives***

This Working Paper questions the concept of “Islamic Art History”. The term is amorphous: ever since the fundamental studies of Oleg Grabar we have known that the direct allocation of religion to art and vice versa raises questions. Art constitutes a cultural subsystem within societies. Sociologically, art has to be tied, or referred, to the realms of politics, economics, law, social orders, institutions and further cultural patterns. Only in the interplay with other cultural studies and the humanities is it possible to deconstruct art, considering its function and cultural context. Often enough it considers its task in the recording, description and classification of objects. This is, of course, an important and essential step, yet, it should not be the reason for stopping to ask further questions about the objects and, especially, to relate them to their socio-cultural context in which they emerged and to which they have to be related. In general, we ask how concepts current in postcolonial studies in disciplines such as history and comparative literature can help Islamic art historians to re-envision their objects of study.



Imprint

Publisher:

Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg (ASK)
Heussallee 18 – 24
53113 Bonn/ Germany

phone: +49 (0)228/ 73 62 945

fax: +49 (0)228/ 73 62 964

e-mail: spiegel@mamluk.uni-bonn.de

www.mamluk.uni-bonn.de

Responsible Editors:

Prof. Dr. Stephan CONERMANN and
Dr. Mohammad GHARAIBEH

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