Current Fellows

New Fellow

Prof. Dr. Caterina Bori
May – July 2016
Project: al-Siyāsah al-sharʿiyyah: Receptions and Uses of a Successful Concept (14th-16th centuries).

Other current Fellows

Prof. Dr. Reuven Amitai


Prof. Dr. Nasser Rabbat


Prof. Dr. Abdalrazzaq Moaz


Dr. Mustafa Banister


Dr. Noah Gardiner


Dr. Reem Alshqour


Dr. Haggai Mazuz


Dr. Cécile Khalifa

https://www.mamluk.uni-bonn.de/fellows/fellows/junior-fellows/dr.-cecile-khalifa-october-2015-september-2016/project

Dr. Gül Şen

https://www.mamluk.uni-bonn.de/fellows/fellows/junior-fellows/dr.-guel-sen/curriculum-vitae
The third conference of the Schools of Mamlūk Studies was held at the University of Chicago in June 23-25. With Stephan Conermann (University of Bonn), “Baybars and his Amirs as Depicted by Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad, (d. 1285) in his al-Rawd al-Zahir fi Sirat al-Malik al-Zahir—Fact or Fiction?”; Mohammad Gharibeh (University of Bonn), “Biographical Dictionaries in the Service of the Intellectual Agenda of Religious Scholars”; Bethany J. Walker (University of Bonn), “What is a ‘Village’?: A Comparative Study of Village Society and Land Use in Mamluk-Era Bilād al-Shām”; and Reem Samed Al Shqour (University of Bonn), “The Economics of the Rural and Urban Khān Markets of Mamluk Jordan” the Annemarie Schimmel Center for Advanced Studies participated with four current fellows and staff members at the conference. In addition to them, four alumni fellows delivered papers as well. Those were Stuart Borsch (Assumption College), “Exchange Systems, Human Capital, and Technological Regression”; Yehoshua Frenkel (University of Haifa), “The Social Role of Knowledge and Scholarship”; Iman R. Abdulfattah (University of Bonn), “From Behind the Scenes: Amir Sanjar al-Shujā’ī ’s Involvement in Building the Complex of Qalawūn”; and Syrinx von Hees (University of Münster), “Sorry, but This is Not White Hair Excuse-Poems—a Special Rhetorical Device as Presented by aṣ-Ṣafādi”.
09/05/2016 - Prof. Dr. Kurt FRANZ  
Eberhardt Karls Universität Tübingen

Transmission and Oblivion of Governance Experience in Islam:  
The Case of Policies on the Bedouin into the Mamluk Period

While governance was a key topic of Arabic historiography and political theory throughout Islamic history, it has hardly been asked in a systematic way whether rulers indeed exercised power professionally. The accumulation and transmission of administrative and governing experience is a vital condition for effective and efficient rule. In this lecture, I shall therefore introduce some general reflections about the (dis-)continuity of this sort of experience in the late medieval Muslim world and name possible approaches. As an example, I will explore the handling of Bedouin populations over several centuries by rulers in the central Islamic lands. Since this was a very troublesome field of politics, rulers could have especially benefited from the availability of a relevant pool of knowledge.

The focus is on rulers who pursued a determined and distinctive policy towards the Bedouin that had the potential to provide a model strategy for the future, with cases ranging from the Ismāʿīlīs of tenth-century East Arabia to the Qipchaq Mamluks (1250 to 1382). What did these policies consist of? Did they prove effective in the given context and what followed from them in the long run of interaction? How and to which degree could rulers’ experiences be preserved so that an increasing repertoire of possible government actions would emerge?

In contrast to Bedouin tribes (or Sufi orders and other defined groups), who thrived on the accumulated experience of their leaders’ lineages, it appears that the passing on of a ruler’s experience was prone to losses as it suffered from struggles over succession, dynastic change, and probably also the loneliness of the ruler. What, then, is the importance of sustainable institutional memory for the exercise of power?

13/06/2016 - Prof. Dr. Devin STEWART  
Emory University

“Editing the Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadim: Problems in the Interpretation of a Crucial Source for the Transmission of Knowledge in the Islamic World

In Baghdad in 987 C.E., the bookseller Ibn al-Nadim compiled the Fihrist, a catalogue of all books of which he was aware in Arabic, in all fields of writing then current. It is at once a rewarding and a frustrating work, because it provides the titles of major early works in fields as diverse as poetry, philosophy, law, theology, and alchemy—works most of which have been lost. At the same time, it describes the work of the translators of Greek, Persian, and Sanskrit works into Arabic who were active from the eighth through the tenth century C.E., and it provides a map of human knowledge and a history of the various academic fields, from Ibn al-Nadim’s point of view. Modern scholarly attempts to understand the Fihrist began in the mid-nineteenth century with the work of Gustav Flügel but have proceeded in fits and starts and have involved many wrong turns and mistaken assumptions. Even the publication of the most recent edition of the work by Ayman Fuad Sayyid in 2014 leaves many problems unsolved. This presentation will recount the troubled history of this project and show the types of problems that remain.
The Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg launched its third Mamluk archaeological field school this season, in partnership with Andrews and Missouri State Universities in the United States. The three-week field school was designed as an ASK summer school to train Mamluk scholars in material culture methods, to further the research of current ASK fellows, and to promote the study of the Mamluk period among archaeologists. It takes place at Tall Hisban in central Jordan, the flagship Mamluk-era site in the country. With a well-preserved Citadel of the 14th century and the contemporary village, the site is uniquely suited for the study of the Mamluks’ exercise of power on the frontier and of the contours of rural life, which are otherwise poorly documented in period texts. (Bethany Walker, see further https://www.mamluk.uni-bonn.de/islamic-archaeology/events).

The Bonn team consisted of ASK-Fellows and students of Islamic Archaeology and Islamic Studies and Egyptology together with Prof. Bethany Walker as Director of Excavations: Post-Docs Reem Al-Shqour and Gül Şen; PhD-students Aris Legowski, Niccolo Pini, Tarek Sabraa, Felicitas Weber and Gregory Williams and MA-students Hend Elsayed, Sherihan Inalo and Robert Peitsch. The PhD-student Adriana Gaspar from the University of Bucharest joined the team in Jordan. Before starting the travel, the Bonn team met several times together to prepare for this year’s field school and excavation season in a most efficient way. So the group went into the field with its specific assignments, research questions and objectives. The team joined the American team in Madaba and started the field work immediately once the necessary material and equipments were purchased. How the daily life in the village was organized and what the structure of a medieval Islamic household looked like were the main questions during this season. The focus of field work of the 2013 and 2014 seasons continued this year with excavations in the well-preserved Mamluk and Ottoman farmhouses on the slope. The most distinctive feature of these buildings is their one-room architecture with plastered floors and their shared courtyards and cisterns. One of the goals of field work this year was to identify foundation trenches and to date the original construction of these farmhouses that have a difficult stratigraphy because of their reusing in the past. The mapping of the hill and its vicinity was conducted by two specialists by using multiple methods of survey and photogrammetry. This season field work was extended to a hinterland survey which was conducted by Gül Şen as a cave survey on the western slope of the hill to understand the multifunction of the caves as a type of rural settlement. The environmental investigation was continued as in the previous seasons by the archaeobotanist Annette Hansen. She taught also the methods of sampling soils at the field and further processes of analysis such as sifting and floating at the camp. The limited time, organizational effort, and the scope of the project required a strict daily working schedule due to which a
productive work and relevant results were feasible at the end of the season. The half of the working days (from very early morning on) was dedicated to the field work at the hill whereas two representatives of the Department of Antiquities in Jordan accompanied the daily work. Most of the Bonn-team had responsibilities as field or square-supervisor under the direction of Prof. Bethany Walker. During this time the site was frequently visited, *inter alia*, by the international teams of archaeologists and the Representatives from Hisban Municipality. The team continued the work in the afternoons at the camp by assisting Prof. Bethany Walker during her pottery reading and learning how to read pottery chronologically. Some evenings of each week were scheduled for an academic program with lectures and workshops on related topics which were given by Prof. Bethany Walker, Prof. Oystein LaBianca and other faculty members and specialists. One notable event this season was the International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAYJ), the most prominent conference in the field, held in Amman during the excavation season. Organized by the Department of Antiquities in Jordan, this conference is held every three years and in different countries. The members of the ASK took one day off from the field and participated in the conference. Prof. Bethany Walker spoke on the rural life in Mamluk Jordan, Reem Al-Shqour gave a paper on her research on Mamluk khans in Jordan with a focus on Aqaba castle and Gül Şen gave a paper on Ottoman Jordan from a transitional perspective with focus on Tall Hisbān. Thus, the ASK was very well presented at this major conference. (See further [http://www.ichaj.org/Program_of_Conference.pdf](http://www.ichaj.org/Program_of_Conference.pdf)). The long weekend tours helped to consider the Tall Hisbān in a broader historical and archaeological context of Jordan. These tours were a journey at the same time throughout the centuries and dynasties which have left their traces not only in the physical remains but also in the culture of the country: From ancient Nabataean city of Petra to Roman city of Jerash, to the imposing Desert Castles of the Umayyads, to the Mamluk and Ottoman castles of Ajlun, Shawbak and Karak, as well as the unique Baptism Site and Dead Sea, some of which are already UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

With its hard work and motivation, the Bonn-team has made a very good impression on the whole international excavation team, the authorities and the locals. By doing so, the contribution of the Bonn University to the Islamic archaeology in Jordan is growing. The next season of the field school and excavation is planned for 2018.

Dr. Gül Şen
Upcoming

Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg Fall School 2016

8th-12th August 2016

Topic: “Reading Fatwas”

The purpose of this year’s Fall School is to introduce participants to the methods, sources, and lines of inquiry in studying medieval fatwas. It grows out of the Annual Programming Theme of the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg in 2015-2016, which is Environmental Approaches to Mamluk Studies. Fatwas are a rich, though under-utilized, source for documenting conflicts of water access and rights, and control of and use of a range of natural resources. Fatwas are an invaluable window on legal institutions (including more “popular” and informal ones), as well as conflict resolution on the local level, relations of “state and society”, and local values and ethics.

The instructors, internationally known specialists in their fields, include:

- Prof. Dr. Yossef Rapoport (Queen Mary University of London) - private law fatwas
- Prof. Dr. David Stephan Powers (Cornell University) - fatwas concerning riparian disputes in the Middle Atlas Mountains, ca. 683-824/1285-1421
- Prof. Dr. Daniella Talmon-Heller (Ben Gurion University of the Negev) - religious life and history (based on a corpus of Ibn Taymiyya)
- Prof. Dr. Stuart Borsch (Assumption College) - water issues, Mamluk Egypt
International Research Colloquium

♦ 08/07/2016 Dr. Pierre Hecker (Marburg): Toward a Semiotic Approach in Islamic Studies

♦ 01/07/2016 Dr. Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab (Beirut): Enlightenment Debates in Cairo and Damascus on the Eve of the 2011 Uprisings

♦ 17/06/2016 Prof. Dr. Chander Shekhar (New Delhi): The Art of Drafting Official Documents at the Mughal Court (Shahjahan to Aurangzeb)

♦ 16/06/2016 Michalis N. Michael (University of Cyprus, Dept. of Turkish and Middle Eastern Studies): Ottoman Elites of the periphery: Cyprus at the beginning of the nineteenth century

♦ 10/06/2016 Lisanne Riedel, M.A. (Bonn): Displacement and Public Housing in Istanbul - Regeneration or Segregation?

♦ 03/06/2016 Prof. Dr. Christoph U. Werner (Marburg): Heroes and Villains in the Modern History of Iran: Reconsidering the Politics of Hajj Mirza Aqasi

♦ 27/05/2016 Dr. Evrim Binbaş (London): From Corporate Sovereignty to Corporate Messianism: Varieties of Fifteenth Century Timurid Political Discourse

♦ 20/05/2016 Prof. Dr. Christian Lange (Utrecht): Paradise and Hell in Islamic Traditions

♦ 13/05/2016 Prof. Dr. Regula Forster (Berlin): Mannerist Tafsir. The Poet Fayzi as Exegete

♦ 25/04/2016 Prof. Dr. Reinhard Schulze (Bern): Guest lecture on current research

♦ 15/04/2016 Prof. Dr. Andreas Kaplony (Munich): A Typology of Arabic Documents

♦ 08/04/2016 Dr. Dilnoza Daturaeva (Tashkent): Diplomacy and Trade in the Eve of Mongol Globalization: The Qarakhanids in Liao and Song China

ASK Newsletter No. 14/ July 2016
Amir ʿAlam al-Din Sanjar al-Shujāʿī (d. 693/1294) was a very influential and powerful amir, perhaps most recognized for his appointments to the vizirate in Egypt and for his role in the military campaigns against the Crusaders. Throughout his career he also acquired a great deal of experience supervising royal constructions for sultans Qalāwūn and al-Ashraf Khalīl. Consequently, he supervised over a dozen new constructions and renovations in Cairo and Greater Syria. The overwhelming majority of these buildings no longer survive and are only available to us in the sources. In this Working Paper the trajectory of Sanjar al-Shujāʿī’s life is traced from his upbringing in Damascus to his death at the hands of al-ʿAdil Kitbughā, integrating his architectural activity along the way. While the most famous building project that Sanjar al-Shujāʿī supervised was the funerary complex of Sultan al-Mansūr Qalāwūn (683/1284-1285), the objective of this paper is to profile his career more fully in order to identify patterns and insights into his style and its evolution, which can be used as a tool in the future to link him projects that are not explicitly linked to him in the sources.

Link: [https://www.mamluk.uni-bonn.de/publications](https://www.mamluk.uni-bonn.de/publications)