

Transnational Research in a Multipolar World

International Conference of the Max Weber Foundation

Parallel Session

'Research Positions in the Triangle Middle East – Japan – Germany'

May 9, 9:00 – 12:00am

Part 1

9.00 – 10.00 Introduction and project presentations

Moderation: Barbara Holthus (DIJ Tokyo)

The Orient Institute in Beirut: German Legacies and International Research Trajectories

Thomas Würtz (Orient Institut Beirut)

Japanese Perspectives of Studying Islam: Introducing the Project of /Islamic Trust Studies/

Hidemitsu Kuroki (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Director of Japanese Center for Middle East Studies (JACMES))

Failure of Area Studies and IR: how should scholars learn lessons from Invasion of Iraq?

Keiko Sakai (Chiba University, Graduate School of Social Sciences / Center for Relational Studies on Global Crises)

Ottoman Studies in Japan: Current State and Prospects

Jun Akiba (Tokyo University, Institute for Advanced Studies on South Asia)

The Orient Institut Istanbul: Interdisciplinary Turkish Studies Between Academic Fashions, the Need to Be Relevant and the Critical Potential of the Humanities

Christoph Neumann (Orient Institut Istanbul)

Academic (Un-)freedoms: The Palestine Exception and Epistemic Violence in the German Humanities

Jens Hanssen (Orient Institut Beirut)

10.00 - 10.30 Coffee Break

Part 2

11.00- 12.00 Discussion

Should the humanities be constructive?

Moderation: Claudia Derichs

Blue-Sky Discussion: Possible academic exchanges and research cooperation(s) between OIB, OII, and Japanese MENA Colleagues and the JACMES Centre in Beirut

CVs

Jun Akiba is professor at the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, the University of Tokyo. He specializes in the history of the Ottoman Empire with a focus on judiciary institution, judicial administration, and education. His main publications include a co-edited volume (with Nobuya Hashimoto), *Social History of Education in Modern Islam: Perspectives from Ottoman History* (in Japanese) (Kyoto, 2014); "Judiciary and Wealth in the Ottoman Empire, 1689–1843," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 66(1-2) (2023) (co-authored with Z. Dörtok Abacı, M. Coşgel, & B. Ergene); and "'Girls are also People of the Holy Qur'an': Girls' Schools and Female Teachers in Pre-Tanzimat Istanbul," *Hawwa* 17 (2019).

Claudia Derichs, PhD, is professor of Transregional Southeast Asian Studies at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. She studied Japanese and Arabic in Bonn, Tokyo, and Cairo and holds a PhD in Japanology (1994, University of Bonn). Her research covers gender, religion, and political violence in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, looking particularly at transregional Islamist movements in and beyond the "long 1960s". She is the editor-in-chief of the scopus-listed *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* (IQAS). She works towards new orientations in Area Studies and subscribes to current approaches of epistemic decolonisation in Western academia.

Jens Hanssen (D.Phil. Oxon) is Professor of Middle Eastern history at the University of Toronto and serves as the director of the Orient-Institut Beirut beginning 1.7.2023. Jens's overall research explores the cultural entanglements between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East since the 19th-century Arabic reform and revival movement – *al-nahda al-'arabiyya*. His books include *Fin de Siècle Beirut; A Clarion for Syria: A Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*, with H. Safieddine; *Arabic Thought against the Authoritarian Age*, with M. Weiss; and the *OUP Handbook of Contemporary North African and Middle Eastern History*, with A. Ghazal. Jens currently serves on the Board of Directors of MESA and on the international advisory board of the Khalidiyya Library in East Jerusalem.

Hidemitsu Kuroki is Professor of the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, and Slavic and Eurasian Research Center, Hokkaido University (cross-appointed). His specialty is Ottoman and modern history of Syria and Lebanon. He has been Head of Japan Center for Middle Eastern Studies in Beirut since 2006. His edited publications include *Human Mobility and Multiethnic Coexistence in Middle Eastern Urban Societies 1, 2* (Tokyo, 2015, 2018) and *The Influence of Human Mobility in Muslim Societies* (London, 2003). Since 2020, he has conducted a project of Grant-in Aid for Transformative Research Areas "Connectivity and Trust Building in Islamic Civilization" (Islamic Trust Studies), involving more than 60 researchers in Japan.

Christoph K. Neumann is director of the Orient-Institut Istanbul. After receiving his Dr.phil. in 1992 at LMU Munich, he worked at the Orient-Institut Istanbul, Boğaziçi University, the Czech National Library and Charles-University in Prague, Istanbul Technical University and Istanbul Bilgi University. In 2008 he became professor of Turkish Studies at LMU. Neumann has published on Ottoman historiography, Ottoman social and cultural history, the urban history of Istanbul, political culture in the Republic of Turkey and Turkish fictional literature. He has also translated Turkish fictional literature into German. His current research is concerned with the emergence of a public sphere in nineteenth-century Istanbul.

Keiko Sakai is a professor at Chiba University and Dean of Center for Relational Studies on Global Crisis. While she worked as a researcher in the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE), she served as a research attaché in the Embassy of Japan in Iraq in the late 80s and served as the overseas researcher at the American University in Cairo in the 90s. Since 2005, Sakai took on the position of Professor at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, then moves to Chiba University in 2012. She has published works on contemporary Iraq and the Middle East, such as *Iraq Since Invasion* (co-editor, Routledge, 2020).

Thomas Würtz (Dr. phil.) is currently Interim Director at Orient-Institut Beirut. After receiving his PhD at the University of Zurich on Islamic Theology in the 14th Century he worked as a research assistant at the universities of Bern and Aarhus. He completed several research trips in Egypt and Pakistan. In 2015, he taught as a guest lecturer at the Free University of Berlin. For several years, he worked as an academic advisor at the Catholic Academy in Berlin in the fields of Islam and the Middle East as well as Christian-Muslim dialogue. His research interests lie primarily in the areas of the Koran and Koranic exegesis as well as Koranic translations and the history of theology.