

Symposium and Exhibition Imaging a 'Middle East'

Orientalism – and its images – are far from dead. Despite Edward Said's forceful critique of Orientalism as a regime of representation that dominates and structures an ambiguous 'East', its discourse persists. Representations, in the form of paintings, drawings, photography, films, and maps, have been powerful means by which the 'Middle East' has been pictured in the last two centuries, and, as such, have animated imperialist projects, fueled Orientalist and self-Orientalist fantasies, and upheld reductive and essentialized understandings of the region and its people. Since September 2001, Orientalist imagery has undergone a political and social intensification, which is now compounded by the 'refugee crisis.' This intensification has been made apparent in discourses that easily interchange the 'immigrant' for the 'refugee' and 'Muslim' in Europe and the US, but also in tropes of Arab, Muslim or Oriental otherness used by political actors in the region itself.

This symposium examines the continued seductiveness that Orientalism seems to hold over the production of images of the contemporary 'Middle East', both inside and outside of the region. How are (self) Orientalized images and imaginaries translated into perceptions of authenticity and identity? How do such images figure into the policies and politics in the ongoing 'global war on terror'? How do modes of contemporary image-making engage with, resist, or respond to tropes of Orientalism in the current political moment?

The symposium features a talk and parallel exhibit by Tintinologist Nadim Damluji on early-to-mid 20th century Arab comic strips, which examine the genealogy of Orientalist image-making from the cartoon to cartography in the present moment.

Please note that the exhibition will take place at Bulbul Berlin, Görlitzerstraße 38, 10997 Berlin.

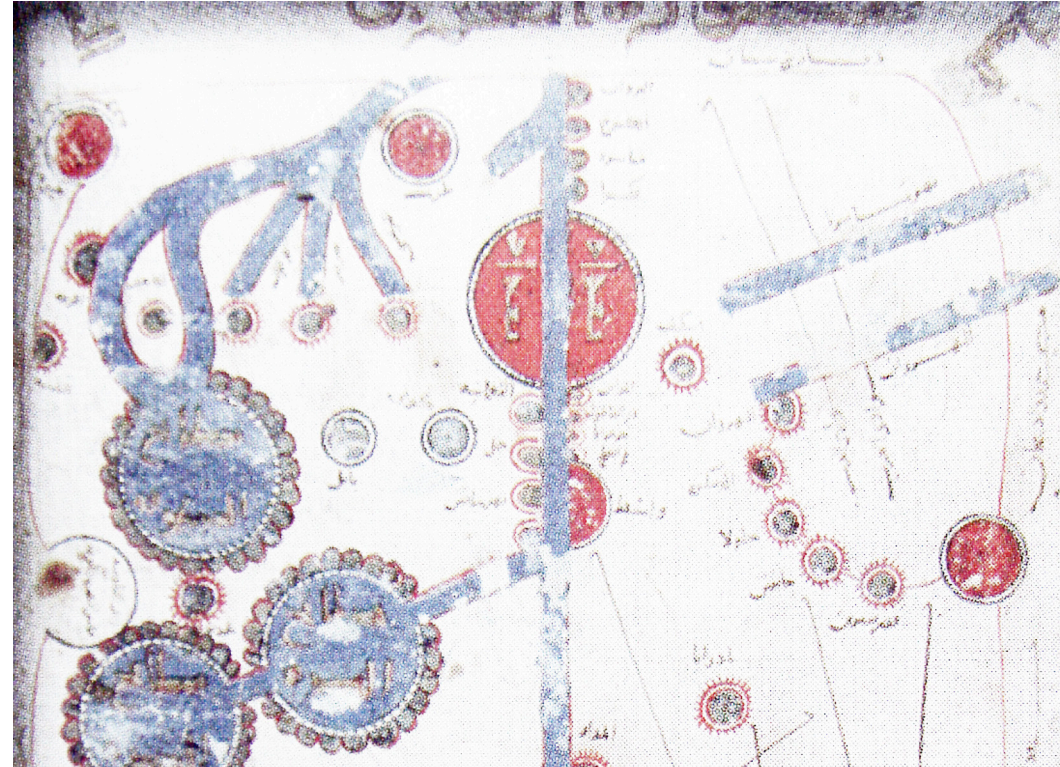
An ICI Event organized by Saima Akhtar, Walid El-Houri, and Banu Karaca in cooperation with Europe in the Middle East – the Middle East in Europe (EUME), a programme at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

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EUME 
Europe in the Middle East
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Forum
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Symposium and Exhibition
6 – 7 July 2017, ICI Berlin, in English



Imaging a 'Middle East'

Programme

THURSDAY, 6 JULY 2017	
11:00	Welcome and Introduction
11:30 – 13:30	Panel I: MAPPING AND GEOGRAPHIES OF HERITAGE Geographies of Orientalism Mariam Banahi (ANTHROPOLOGIST, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY) Syrian Heritage Archive Project (SHAP): Archives as a Basis for Post-War Masterplan Zoya Masoud (ARCHITECT AND URBAN PLANNER, TU BERLIN) Empty Spaces: Photographic Mapping and the Construct of ‘Heritage’ in the Middle East Mirjam Brusius (ART HISTORY/PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD) Until the River Winds Ninety Degrees West Nadine Hattom (VISUAL ARTIST, BERLIN)
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch break
14:30 – 15:45	Panel II: (RE)MAKING AND PICTURING THE URBAN Of the West but Not On It? Beirut and the Real Katarzyna Puzon (SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGIST, HU BERLIN) Suspended Geographies: The Creation of Orientalist Hotelier Space in Qatar Mohamad Khalil Harb (MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES, HARVARD UNIVERSITY) Oil Lamps and Drilling Towers: Imaging the Arab Gulf Cities During the Age of (Post)Oil Laura Hindelang (GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MUSLIM CULTURES AND SOCIETIES, FU BERLIN)
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 18:00	Panel III: FICTIONALIZING PASTS, IMAGING FUTURES Science Fiction in the Orient: Contesting Legacies to Imagine the Future Shilpa Jindia (INDEPENDENT RESEARCHER, CONSULTANT, AND WRITER, WASHINGTON, D.C.) Rachel Dedman (INDEPENDENT CURATOR AND WRITER, BEIRUT) New EastEnders - The Prequel Anahita Razmi (VISUAL ARTIST, BERLIN) Fiction in Documentary Photography and Its ‘Making of Iran’ Catherine Bublatzky (PHOTOGRAPHER AND ANTHROPOLOGIST, HEIDELBERG UNIVERSITY) Techno-Utopian Fantasies and Digital Nation States: Transfiguring Realities of the Middle East Heba Y. Amin (VISUAL ARTIST AND RESEARCHER, BARD COLLEGE BERLIN/FU BERLIN)
18:00 – 19:30	Coffee break
19:30	Keynote Translation as Trojan Horse/Translation as Conversation Nadim Damluji (INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR, NEW YORK) Welcoming remarks: Georges Khalil Introduction: Saima Akhtar

FRIDAY, 7 JULY 2017	
13:00 – 14:30	Panel IV: SUBVERSION AND RESISTANCE An Uncivil Resistance: Images of Egyptian Workers (WWI) Leading up to 1919 Revolution Alia Mossallam (ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT FELLOW, EUME/FU BERLIN) Resisting Orientalism at the Cinema in Egypt Ifdal Elsaket (HISTORY/ARABIC STUDIES, NETHERLANDS-FLEMISH INSTITUTE IN CAIRO) On the Changing Economy of Resistance Images Mary Jirmanus Saba (GEOGRAPHER AND FILMMAKER, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT)
14:30 – 15:00	Coffee break
15:00 – 16:30	Panel V: VISUALIZING THE ‘WAR ON TERROR’ Victim, Terrorist or Romantic Revolutionary? Decolonizing Visuality in Palestine and Beyond Hannan Toukan (MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES, BROWN UNIVERSITY) The Clash of Digitalizations: The Devolution of Arab Men from Humans to Digital Fodder Saud Al-Zaid (ISLAMIC THOUGHT/ARAB STUDIES, FU BERLIN) When Images Collide: Workings of Sexuality in the Kurdish Conflict Hilal Alkan (EUME FELLOW, FORUM TRANSREGIONALE STUDIEN)
16:30	Closing remarks
21:00	Exhibition Opening at Bulbul Berlin, Görlitzerstraße 38 Arab Comics: 90 Years of Visual Culture Nadim Damluji (INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR, NEW YORK)