



FEEL JUNE

**Transregional
Academy**

Submission Deadline:
December 15, 2018

Call for Applications

Fragment – Power – Public

Narrative, Authority, and Circulation in Archival Work

August 26 – September 6, 2019, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

ORGANIZED BY THE

Forum
Transregionale
Studien



Max Weber
Stiftung
Deutsche
Geisteswissenschaftliche
Institute im Ausland

IN COOPERATION WITH



ORIENT
INSTITUT
BEIRUT
مجمع الدراسات والبحوث الشرقية



The Arab Fund For Arts and Culture
المصندوق العربي للثقافة والفنون – أفاق

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The Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien, the Max Weber Stiftung – Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland and the Department of Arabic and Near Eastern Languages of the American University of Beirut (AUB) cordially invite doctoral and postdoctoral scholars from the humanities and social sciences, as well as research-oriented artists and writers, to apply for a Transregional Academy in the framework of the research program EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST – THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME). The Transregional Academy will be convened from August 26th to September 6th, 2019 at the AUB in Beirut on the topic of

Fragment – Power – Public: Narrative, Authority, and Circulation in Archival Work.

It will be chaired by **Rasha Chatta** (EUME Fellow 2018/19), **Leyla Dakhli** (CNRS / Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin), **Pascale Ghazaleh** (American University in Cairo / EUME Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation 2017-19), **Zeina G. Halabi** (AUB / EUME Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation 2018-20), **Lamia Moghnieh** (EUME Fellow of the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung 2019-20), **Alia Mossallam** (EUME Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation 2017-18), and **Ala Younis** (artist). It is arranged in cooperation with the German Orient Institut in Beirut (OIB), the American University in Beirut (AUB), and the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC).

Twenty-four doctoral and postdoctoral scholars and artists from different countries and backgrounds will present and discuss their current research in an international and multidisciplinary context. Collectives, artists and scholars from Lebanon who work with archives will also contribute to the Academy. The Academy is designed to support scholarly networks and closer ties among research activities in and outside Europe and the Middle East. In order to promote intensive debate and encourage new perspectives, it is structured around four main elements: presentations of individual research projects in small groups, working group sessions for the participants, general lectures, and panel discussions open to a wider public.

Rationale

Scholars of history, culture and society in and of the Middle East, no matter what their political engagement, were swept up in the wave of Arab uprisings that started in 2010. The revolutions brought to a paroxysm a process of contestation that had been building since the 1990s, when new critiques began to challenge old narratives and ideologies and shake their hold on public space and the political sphere.

The return to the archives had opened up radical possibilities for social histories as early as the 1970s. Even then, for many scholars, turning to the archives was a way of exploring new narratives and questioning dominant discourses; but, since 2010, they have also found themselves formulating more fundamental questions related to the nature, constitution, and ownership of the archives. Excavating fragments of the past and attempts to document the present have led researchers to question the role of the state and its cultural practices in gathering and preserving these fragments, the nature of the public institutions involved in this endeavor, and the authority to define what legitimately constitutes an archive; the uprisings thus drove scholarship further beyond state-centered monistic narratives, to explore different historical and literary representations as sources for the production of knowledge and a reflection on the culture/power nexus. This interest, of course, has not been restricted to the academy: it has served to support work in curation, art, performance,

and activism. New technologies supported one aspect of the archival turn, as evidenced by the development of digital humanities and the incorporation of such technologies into pedagogy. Thus, current research expands the boundaries of what constitutes legitimate membership in the community of historians, and intervenes in archival material through a variety of formats and venues.

This cross-disciplinary, international Transregional Academy also probes the ways in which the past, present and future have been and are imagined, represented, and reconfigured in modern historiography, literature, art and thought in archival work. Examining questions of aesthetics, genre, translation, and historiography, it aims to build on ongoing conversations about the practice of literary, artistic and historiographic excavation.

This Academy presents an opportunity for collaboration among different actors (historians, scholars of literature, anthropology and other disciplines, artists, graphic artists, performance artists in music, theatre and cinema, archivists, and others) and poses the following questions:

- How do we make sense of the increasing interest in archives by scholars and artists in and outside the Middle East?
- How do we relate the changes in technology and media, the new possibilities of storage and communication to the closure, disintegration, and to the policing of archives and people?
- How can we make archives and other historical narratives accessible in ways that are true to their forms (visual, sound, etc.) and conducive to more experiences and possibilities than those offered by monographs?
- How can we make our sources/narratives more accessible to a wider public through digital humanities and/or public history projects? And what are the limits?
- How can we cultivate relations between scholars and other practitioners to widen our scope for understanding and representing the archives with which we work?
- How can we, as scholars, work with (or without) certain gaps in the archive or with fragmented archives? And how can we deal with the abundance of facts and different readings?
- How to give voice to subjects and characters, whose experiences fall within and outside state archives?
- How have historians, writers, artists and intellectuals been engaged with the cultural or people's archives in modern times?
- How have excavation practices in literature transformed the literary and what is revealed from such practices of excavation?

We invite scholars in the humanities and social sciences, as well as artists engaged in ongoing research projects about and with archives from the Middle East and other regions. We are equally interested in comparisons, contemporary and historical cases and diverse and dissident approaches to these questions from across the humanities and social sciences, at all scales, and their interconnections.

Structure

The Academy aims to provide a forum for scholars in social sciences and humanities and research-oriented artists and writers who are interested in discussing and exchanging on questions of archives and archival practices in past and present societies and in diverse contexts.

The Transregional Academy promotes intensive peer-to-peer debates and encourages new perspectives grown from debates in small discussion groups. Participants take an active part in contributing to the program's structure and content. They present their individual research, co-design thematic discussion groups, and are involved in organizing the thematic discussions. While most of the work is conducted in an intensive small-group atmosphere, the Transregional Academy also presents its work to the public through general lectures and open panel discussions. For more information on the format please visit our Transregional Academies blog:

<https://academies.hypotheses.org/>.

Organization

The Transregional Academy is chaired by the above-mentioned group of scholars and organized by the Forum Transregionale Studien in cooperation with the AUB, OIB and AFAC.

For questions regarding the concept of the Academy, please contact Georges Khalil; for questions regarding eligibility and format, please contact Jessica Metz, both at: eume@trafo-berlin.de; phone +49 (0)30 89 001 427; fax: +49 (0)30 89 001 440.

Application and Procedure

Travel, accommodation and meals of the participants will be fully covered. The program targets doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, as well as research-oriented artists and writers, who wish to present their ongoing projects in both a comparative perspective and in relation to the questions raised above. Moreover the researcher's work should be clearly relevant to the themes of the Transregional Academy. The working language is English. The application should likewise be in English and consist of:

- a brief motivation letter that describes the relevance of one's own research to the Academy's topic and contains a few paragraphs outlining what the applicant could contribute to the collective in terms of a talk, thematic discussion, viewing, performance etc., as well as two suggested readings relevant to the Academy's theme which you would like to discuss with other participants (please provide bibliographical data only, no copies of the suggested readings are required);
- a curriculum vitae, indicating at the end the names of two university faculty members or collaborators who can serve as referees (no letters of recommendation required);
- a three- to five-page outline of the project the applicant is currently working on, with a brief summary thereof.

Deadline: **15 December 2018**.

Please send your application by **e-mail** as **one PDF file** to eume@trafo-berlin.de.

Applicants will be notified with the result of the selection process by February 2019.

The Transregional Academy is a format developed by the Forum Transregionale Studien. It is part of the strategic cooperation between the Forum Transregionale Studien and the Max Weber Stiftung - Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland and supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, BMBF).

The Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien is a research organization that promotes the internationalization of research in the humanities and social sciences. It is dedicated to a research agenda that systematically links disciplinary approaches and the expertise of area studies, by focusing on entanglements and interactions across national, cultural or regional borders. The Forum is supported by the Land of Berlin.

EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME) is a research program at the Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien. EUME seeks to rethink key concepts and premises that link and divide Europe and the Middle East. EUME builds upon the previous work of the Working Group Modernity and Islam (1996-2006), the idea of “learning communities,” and the principle of “research with, rather than research on.” It allows for the invitation of 10 to 20 postdoctoral researchers every year, the organization of (summer) academies, workshops, and regular seminars. So far more than 250 scholars have been EUME fellows.

The Max Weber Stiftung promotes global research, concentrated around the areas of social sciences, cultural studies, and the humanities. Research is conducted at ten institutes in various countries worldwide with distinctive and independent focal points. Through its globally operating institutes, the Foundation is able to contribute to the communication and networking between Germany and the host countries or regions of its establishments.

For more information please visit:

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